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# ANTICHRIST

## AND OTHER SERMONS

PREACHED BY

JOHN NEVILLE FIGGIS

DOCTOR IN LETTERS, HONORARY FELLOW OF S. CATHARINE'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE
PRIEST OF THE COMMUNITY OF THE RESURRECTION

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TO

HENRY FREDERIC BARCLAY MACKAY

# PREFACE

THESE Sermons are selected from sermons preached during the past five years. Some of them have already appeared in *The Commonwealth, The Church Times, The Guardian;* and I have to thank the editors for permission to republish them.

Although the sermons are not strung on any single thread, the volume preserves a certain unity. Stress is laid on (*a*) the distinctness of the Christian system, and with this (*b*) the conception of freedom and its relation to miracle, and (*c*) the hiddenness of the Christian Life, its other-worldly nature, as being lived in union with the Risen and Ascended Lord, and (*d*) the evils of our present industrial and social system, and in this regard the duty of severe self-examination of those united by the "Communion of Saints."

In regard to the topic of the miraculous, it may be as well to state that the defence of

miracle does not involve the belief in any or every marvel recorded in the Old or the New Testament, and that neither here nor elsewhere must the writer be taken as making such an assertion. What is of importance is the total supernatural character of the whole experience.

Once more I have to thank Rev. A. Wicksteed for much help.

J. NEVILLE FIGGIS.

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# ANTICHRIST[1]

"There was war in Heaven. Michael and his Angels fought against the Dragon, and the Dragon fought and his Angels, and prevailed not."—REV. xii. 7 (R.V.).

WAR! That is the enduring condition of the Church on this earth. That is what the word means when we call her militant. And war means an enemy, an opposing spirit. You can have no warfare without there be two mutually opposing spirits.

What is that unity of spirit which makes many one and binds them together in scorn and hatred of us? Now the Apocalypse of St. John the Divine pictures, in images of compelling beauty, truths that are vital to the whole passage of the Church through time. Nor ever was their piercing reality more opportune than now. The thought which flames through the Book of the Revelation is that of a great warfare—a warfare between two kingdoms: that is, two organised bodies

[1] Preached at All Saints', Margaret Street.

of spiritual being, the Kingdom of Jerusalem, the Heavenly City, the Bride of the Lamb which is from above, the Mother of us all, the Kingdom of Christ, and the Kingdom which is spiritually called Egypt or Sodom, the Kingdom of darkness or Antichrist, the home of all the spirits that hate His Name. In brief, Christ and all that He includes are encompassed by real foes. They are not merely encountered by the slowness of men and their ignorance, by their chance caprices, or by their unregulated carnality, but by a deliberate and determined love of evil, a frigid and calculated spirit of self-assertion.

All through the New Testament will be found the note of that gigantic enmity. It is not the theme of a single book alone like the Apocalypse. It inspires the Gospel and Epistle of St. John. It can be seen even in the Synoptic writers, especially in the movement that led to the Passion. It is not absent from St. Peter, or St. James, or St. Jude. Yet it is nowhere more clearly evident than in a writer by temperament and outlook so different as St. Paul. In a score of flashing phrases he makes bright this conflict, as when in the first chapter to the Romans he draws

his lurid picture of where the spirit of this world ends at the last; or where, yet more boldly, he describes in Galatians the issues of those two irreconcilable oppugnant spirits—"The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like. But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."

Do you suppose that fight is over? Do you think that the spirit that has that issue has owned its conqueror? Look round about you. Think of what lives and moves in London, or Paris, or Tripoli, or the whole of what is called the civilised world. Does it not almost seem as if those thousand years of Satan's binding, which had set in with the peace of the Church under Constantine, had been done with some centuries, and that the spirit of Antichrist, cold, pitiless, beautiful in arrogant evil, glorying in open triumph, was now abroad among us and daily grew more insulting?

What I mean is that we are witnessing and feeling an assault made before our eyes upon every single ideal of thought and feeling and action which we can call specifically Christian; that that assault is being directed by men of known power; that in many ways it has with it the current of feeling and the people's applause. I mean that all the things which the spirit of Christ bids us do or avoid doing are being openly reversed. There is proceeding what Friedrich Nietzsche called a transvaluation of all values. At every street-corner, every shop, at all the libraries, at the theatres, and upon every platform, men are coming forward, like the Christian priest to the Sicambrian King Clovis, to bid us burn what we once adored and adore what we once burned.

Let me try very briefly to justify this statement. No part of Christian living could seem more vital than that which treats of human life as something holy, which regards marriage as sacred because it is sacramental. Now at this moment what do we find? First of all, that the perplexities of certain hard cases are constantly paraded. About these cases genuine worry may be quite possible; we can

all know of instances where *summum jus* is *summa injuria*, and it will always be true even in these things, and there is ever the temptation to forget the maxim that hard cases make bad law. You cannot make your general rule merely for the hard cases. But as a fact that is nothing to what is really going on. One writer of our most brilliant and most earnest bids us make divorce as cheap, as easy, and as secret as possible, and openly flouts any view of the union but that which is purely physiological.

Now this is the direct contrary of our Christian notion, which is that the inner meaning of marriage is sacramental, and that therefore the outward part needs guarding; and the sacramental meaning of love is really the burden of all literature. Such a view could only come naturally to an age which had passed from a denial of the whole sacramental principle to a questioning of the Incarnation, and then to repudiate the spiritual meaning of all physical facts. For if matter be something non-spiritual, and outside God's Kingdom, then the marriage-bond may very easily be treated like a contract, made or broken at will. If it has no meaning beyond

certain outward acts, then of course the moral or spiritual law has nothing to do with it.

I need not go further into the attacks which are now prevalent upon the whole ideal of purity and even the deliberate approval of vices which people hitherto have not been accustomed to speak of.

Let us pass to other things. A well-known writer, on the Christian side, announces a new story with the title, *A Man of No Sorrows*. This book, it is said, will chronicle the advent of a new ideal of life, the very opposite of the Christian hero, a type splendid in proud assertion, loveless, fortunate, and hard. This type is certainly with us, and always will be until sin and self be eradicated. What is new is the open and contemptuous way in which it is set up to be worshipped in place of that Figure on the Cross, which has appealed for two thousand years to all that is pitiful and tender and most human.

Along with the love of God there is slowly but surely being undermined all real sense of the love of man. The gospel of tenderness and humility, as figured upon the Cross, is now as ever to the Jews a stumbling-block, to the Greeks foolishness. One writer tells

us to purge our religion of dependence upon the memorial of a mere act of barbarism, and get the Crucifix away from our eyes and the Cross from our hearts, And another, in so many words, says that the Person of Jesus Christ does not appeal to him. Another, while yet admiring our Lord Himself, tells us that the whole ethic is obsolete, that what we need now is the ideal of good behaviour at its best, which we call gentlemanly conduct, which in his view is neither Hebrew, nor Hellenic, but Gothic in its provenance.

Large portions of the world are, as always, intent upon money getting, with less scruple and more absorption and more general admiration than ever before, and discerning that this is not compatible with the Christian aim, they boldly throw over the latter. Thus it is true to say that in all directions the ideals of life that we call Christian are being met with derisive denial; that this denial does not stop at details, but goes right down to the principles of the whole life.

Moreover, this denial has its roots in a spirit yet more antagonistic to Christian living, for it rests upon a disbelief in the reality, first, of sin, and, secondly, of the

other world. One of our most widely read novelists has recently added to the number, if not to the fame, of his productions by a work in which he says of the heroine, that she was in fact almost the last intelligent sufferer from a malady which has nearly passed away from the civilised world—sin. In other words, fewer and fewer among the educated have the Christian feeling of sin as a chosen act of evil, staining the soul, breaking its inner harmony, and calling for deliverance. This writer is glad of the change. I am not glad, but I think that he is very largely right about the fact.

Some one said to me once of a sermon on this very topic of penitence, which I preached in this church, that it seemed all unreal and remote, and asked how many of those listening could have felt at all as I did? It was not my sincerity that was denied, but its relation to anything that most people feel. Even of a priest of our Church I heard who said that he could not seriously hold that anyone sins wilfully against God. But all around us we see in fact the fulfilment of the idea set out by Nietzsche, that man should copy the innocence of Christ, and copy it, not by winning

pardon for sin and peace, but by denying that anything which they do is ever sinful.

There is less sense of sin abroad, but it is not because men are better, nor is it because more of them make use of the means of grace. It is because so many have no longer any belief that sin is a transgression of God's will. First, sin is reduced to a mere failure to fulfil a code of duty, and God is left out. Then eventually, either because we are supposed to be determined in our action or because we can do what we like, the whole idea of sin is dropped. These people do not seriously hold that there is a God in heaven to whom they are responsible, They may not all disbelieve in God, but they do disbelieve in their being responsible to God or anyone else, and disbelieving that, they scoff at every kind of authority, and they deny that there is any personal and individual meaning in the life beyond. That is the final cause.

This saturnalia of arrogance is due to the profound disbelief in the powers of the world to come. Its high priests are never weary of shrieking "God is dead! God is dead!" The world beyond, as a society of spirits in which we shall share, has ceased to be a factor in

the life of whole circles of people to-day. Prayer, it may be, and some sort of faith-healing, and a kind of spiritual life, and even religion and God may be maintained, but all these, either as forms of self-suggestion, or as a vague spiritual beauty of pantheism in which all individual existence is to be reabsorbed.

Now of course I do not mean that all our adversaries hold every one of these views, or that some, for instance, of those who disbelieve in a life beyond may not have a view approximately Christian about human life and moral duty, like the Positivist, or that others of those who reject Jesus Christ as Lord may not admire Him very greatly as a teacher, and outshine us in the way they follow Him. But what I do mean is that there is a spirit abroad which is actively and consciously opposed to that of Christ; that whether it be that it denies, in the name of love all discipline, or in the name of common sense all chastity, or in the name of healthy mindedness the notion of the Cross, the philosophy of suffering, or in the name of reason that of sin as undetermined choice of evil, or in the name of probability that of individual life beyond the grave —yet in all these ways the spirit is one and the

same. Its meaning and its essence are anti-Christian. And it is in a world such as this that the Church has to fight for her distinct existence. It is in this all-pervading atmosphere that the problems of our faith and life are to-day discussed; and I say that our first and clearest duty is to preserve the distinctness which makes Christianity what it is and not something else, and also to beware of supposing that a few concessions here and there will really conciliate our foes; for these foes are bent upon our annihilation and will be satisfied with nothing less. There are those who appear to suppose that at bottom everybody is really agreed if we only knew it, or that all our differences are matters of detail, that if we only gave up our rather absurd attachment to the "tinsel of miracle," or our antiquated and non-modern notion of marriage, or a fanatical and unhealthy doctrine of sin which at best is only a survival, to say nothing of our creeds and formularies—that then all would be well, that the world would flock once more to our churches and would indeed awake one morning to find itself Christian. Believe me, nothing of the sort would happen. Even Mr. R. J. Campbell

has been saying lately that the real difficulty is that the idea of worship has become distasteful, that he does not find as a fact that the churches which preach the New Theology, as it is called, are really much better filled than those which preach the old evangelical orthodoxy. It is a most remarkable statement of fact. The world at large does not love Christ and it is at last able to say so. The spirit I speak of would reject our overtures with scorn, and it would ask, "Why do you insult me by telling me that I am Christian at heart when I am nothing of the sort? I neither believe the things you believe nor do I do or try to do the things you try to do, nor do I admire Him whom you worship, I hate these things, and I will not rest until they be done away from among men." *Ecrasez l'infame*, so said Voltaire of the Church, and so say many to-day, neither so religious nor so Christian in sentiment even as was Voltaire. It is to betray the grossest ignorance of the world in which we live to talk of our present controversies as though they were all being conducted in a rectory garden, with every one friendly and the most unbelieving ready, and indeed anxious, to walk across the

garden to the evening service if you could only make the path a little clearer. It is not a garden, it is a gulf which divides these people from the Church. It is a different kind of life from ours which they want, different in its aims, different in its hopes, different in every prejudice and every taste, different in its whole meaning.

And remember that they are determined to have it. Do not let us deceive ourselves. This assault which is now being delivered from all sides is no child's game. It is not the melancholy unfaith of those who lament that they can but honour where we adore. It is not the languid refusal of some dilettante agnostic too much bored to decide. It is the passionate and deliberate hatred of all that we hold dear, by the fanatics of an alien faith—the faith that this world is all, that the Christian Church is a thing loathsome and contemptible; and also the belief that she is a decaying force, and the desire to be the power triumphant upon her ruins.

That is what we have to face, a foe contemptuous, resolved, and confident of speedy triumph. The sooner we all recognise this and close our ranks, and forget our divisions,

and march on in the only Name by which we can conquer, the better for us all. It is a fight, a long fight, and nothing but a fight that we are in for, and, for God's sake, do not let us start crying out Peace! Peace! when there is no peace. For this spirit can be met by nothing but by its own opposite—the spirit of Christ. Worldly power, or hereditary achievement, or historical rights, or treasured memories, or learning, or eloquence, or high morality will leave men cold. The fleshly arm will no longer avail us, and what there is of it is largely on the other side. It is only as we are Christians that we can win this battle. Only as we live by that spirit can we have hope or strength to encounter this infinitely subtle, various, and resourceful spirit which is working against Him. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

"Wherefore take unto you the armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand. Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about

with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God: praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; and for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the Gospel."

# THE POSSESSORS OF THE FUTURE

"If any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature."—2 COR. v. 17.

A NEW creature! It is the freshness of a great experience, not the deduced conclusion of a controversialist, that utters itself in these words. Nothing is more marked in the New Testament than the sense of newness: "a new commandment," "a new covenant," "a new life and a better hope," "a mystery hid but now revealed," "a new power and a new joy." It is all-embracing; it includes knowledge and feeling and conduct. It is life, and not some part of it, that is new, and therefore it begins with a new birth: "I am crucified with Christ," "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." So strong is this sense of a new spirit. "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

It is this overmastering sense of being in possession of a new thing—altering all values,

and making dead what went before—that is the psychological meaning of the New Testament. The sense of a new spirit, and the dying out of old things, is not so unique as we suppose. It comes throughout life. Most naturally it is to be observed in the change from the pursuits and thoughts of a child to those of a boy, from a boy to a youth at college, and after that with the plunge into the world. For instance, there is a time when it is right and natural that bodily things should play a large part. The boy who shows no interest or keenness in such things has got something wrong with him, or is being wrongly trained by others. But later on in most cases these things take quite a secondary place. They are dead except so far as now and then they are galvanised into life on medical advice.

So with all the toys and joys of youth. They change. How well I recollect the time! I am not sure I ever had such joy in my life as when there came first to my hand and eye the mystery of the far-famed stamp of Nicaragua, or the Koh-i-noor treasure of Thurn und Taxis. But I should not think so much of these things now.

As man develops he rises naturally from one level of being to another, and with it his thoughts and his interests change, though, of course, he goes on using the power that he has gained in the former state. The bodily powers developed at one time are used later on. The mental powers developed by study on subjects now forgotten are still employed, and so forth. Too many, alas! never get beyond the level of mental culture, which holds its charm for us all, and from which the Epistle to the Corinthians marks St. Paul's own emancipation.

Another obvious instance is the change made by falling in love—many people would say that they had hardly been alive till then—and further on by family life. The difficulties and the gains of all these stages spring from the fact that the change is spiritual, embracing the whole being, and that it is a new kind of life which is, as it were, to be begun afresh.

So with Christians. One reason why we are such failures and why the Church herself is stained with so many horrors and shames, is not the natural evil of man, but the fact that the life lived is a new thing, some-

thing not natural but supernatural, and that this new life is only developing itself by slow degrees and with many reversions to the old and lower levels.

Still it is a new life, something distinct from all others, though here and there showing affinities alike with other religions and other moral systems. For this newness becomes distinctness rather than novelty as time goes on; it is still fresh at every conversion, new in every baptized child, vital in every true penitent, and personally felt as such by many but not by all, even of those who are devout.

The spirit that came with Christ has been working in the world ever since, has created its institutions, has helped to build up for itself a civilisation, has inspired painting and poetry and architecture and literature, has changed the thoughts and the tastes and the customs of mankind far beyond the circle of its immediate adherents. And on this side it comes to us not as new but as old, as part of our inheritance. It has something of the charm, something also of the dullness of tradition. The characters of that charming book *Dulce Domum* would not be what they are but for the atmosphere which has

surrounded them from birth and before it. Another instance would be the life described in a novel of an older generation, *Le Récit d'une Sœur*, and, I suppose, Miss Yonge's books.

Now, by such people the Church is taken for granted no less than is their nation and the national life; it cannot be new to them as it was to St. Paul, or even to the modern convert from unbelief or heathenism. True, as each one makes the Church his own, finds in it a power against unbelief, temptation, or trouble, it becomes new. Religion is in essence a friendship, and all friendship is full of surprises. Still, it is not now novel in the sense of the mighty change that writes itself in the New Testament, and shouts its triumph in the perorations of St. Paul. For all that, it is something *sui generis*, and that is the true meaning of newness—not novelty, but individuality; not what had never been before, but what will be always itself; something with a life of its own, not an eclectic combination of other cults, nor a mosaic of moral aphorisms. We have still a right to speak of our life in Christ Jesus as a new thing in that it is a life informed by a different spirit from every other.

This truth we must cherish. The Christian Church has for so long a time been a large body; and under a disastrous inheritance from the ages of persecution it has until recently been so much the custom for the average person to be a nominal Christian, that there has been the very greatest danger of our losing the sense of what the Church means; and I believe that there are many people who are perfectly conscientious in entirely denying to the Church any meaning at all. We are tempted to identify Christianity with certain tendencies, partly good and partly bad, in the world of thought, of morals, and of culture, and to ignore its separate and transcendent reality.

A fortnight ago I spoke of the spirit of arrogant hatred of all that we mean by the name of Christian. To-day I am speaking of a subtler foe and one less easily discerned, the spirit which often through a genuine and Christian desire to be sympathetic is ever ready to confuse Christianity with something else, and to surrender to a foe who is insatiable everything that invests the Church with charm, all that gives her the unique appeal she still holds. Thus it denudes the Bride of

Christ of her wedding garment—that is, her other-worldly meaning — to offer for the worship of men and women, not a life but a mummy, a mummy with its head made up from obsolete philosophy and an evanescent science, with its hands and feet of a cold unlovable morality and with eyes fixed, not on the vision of the altogether lovely behind the appearance of things, but on the shifting colours of a mechanical kaleidoscope.

The world has no use, never will have any use, for a faith whose meaning lies in the other world; for a vital experience of sin felt and forgiveness received; for an ideal symbolised by "that strange Man on the Cross," who told us we must die to live. The world does not want these things and is not going to have them. And at the same time it thinks them or some of their results "rather pretty"; and it is not above going some way in the hopes of effecting an arrangement with the Christian spirit—a thing so disagreeable when it is roused, and so gentle and sympathetic if it can be properly managed. So the squire would like to ask the rector to dinner in order to prevent his talking quite so much nonsense. The world

has been trying to manage us ever since the days of Ananias, and it is trying still. And in so large a measure does it succeed that it looks as though it would succeed entirely, and people think so; but it never does.

At this moment the world is rather religious. Entrenched behind a philosophy nominally spiritual, really pantheistic, it contemplates the universe as a sort of decorative mechanism, and adores its supernatural significance so long as you say nothing of the transcendence of God, and keep clear of miracles, always a little vulgar. To that extent it will call itself Christian.

Entrenched again, as always, in the passion and pride of men to whom the Cross is foolishness, it will speak with delight of the triumphs of our Christian Empire and the gold heaps of Protestant prosperity. But if you barely mention the poor, or if you hint at the morality of inter-state relations, it begins to prate about "looting the accumulations of capital," or to tell you that parsons have no business with politics.

Again, entrenched behind a sense of beauty, non-moral and confined to this life, the world

can talk very pleasantly about the Pointed, or the Romanesque, or the beauty of the Grande Chartreuse, and wax wrathful at the sacrilegious robbery of the Madonna Della Stella. Tell it that all its rapture ought to have a meaning, that Fra Angelico could not have painted Our Lady as he did if he had not believed in her; that monasteries would not be possible but for monks, it smiles at your outworn fanaticism. Go a little further and suggest that beauty is a servant but not a master; that a beautiful poem, or play, or novel, which incites mainly to lust, had better not have been, and then no words can express its scorn, and you hear the old *cliché*, art for art's sake, which in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred means art for lust's sake. It ought to mean art divorced from life; it would not be true even then, but most people mean something quite different —art attached to life, and helping to bad life.

Entrenched again in the curious caprice of man and his love of change, the world treats the New Testament as a Chinese puzzle, fits the parts together in every way except the natural, and bids us look at a Christ who did not rise, at a Church without a Pentecost,

and a Paul without a revelation, and say, "These be thy gods, O Israel, that brought thee up out of Egypt."

Now all this is in the air. I say we need to beware of it. We should all like to commend Jesus Christ to the world. The danger is of mutilating Him to fit its notions; and instead of transforming the world by the Church, we are in imminent risk of killing the Church by the world. The influence of a spiritual atmosphere is so subtle; it penetrates so deeply that, before we know where we are, we find ourselves accepting certain results of so-called inquiry which are valid only on presuppositions, presuppositions which are kept out of sight, which we should repudiate if they were stated. It is most obviously the case in the matter of criticism. Many people are rushed into giving up the Virgin Birth or the Resurrection of our Lord simply because they do not see that the critical methods proceed upon certain unproved, unstated assumptions, assumptions which they do not themselves believe. The empty tomb story cannot be explained, therefore we must alter it into something else, when the whole meaning of the tale is

that it relates a unique, inexplicable experience.

Another story like that of the Gospel for to-day goes beyond the ordinary cases of faith-cure, therefore these other elements are certainly additions of legend, when the whole point is that Jesus went beyond every other man, and it is natural that His acts, though akin to others, in the spiritual control of matter, go beyond them.

Or once more. The Virgin Birth rests solely for its evidence on St. Matthew and St. Luke, and if they be inconsistent, it may be neglected. If there were only one of them we should be told there was one authority only, and it was not enough. Now, as a matter of fact, none of us believe that this story was never known in the Church before these documents, and that people got their belief from them. These documents recount the manner of a known fact to a body which believes it. They did not persuade a society previously incredulous in the way that the appearances of the Resurrection convinced the Apostles.

Many more instances might be given, all springing from the same error. It is assumed

that our Lord Jesus Christ was normal, and the documents are manipulated so as to get rid of all evidence to the contrary, and then the result is presented as the historical Jesus. The objections to this figure being correct are twofold. Firstly, no honest treatment of the documents enables us to reduce their central figure to a merely normal, moral enthusiast, and this is proved even on the part of our opponents, firstly through the growth of the Apocalyptic school; for this school, whatever its exaggerations, presents Jesus as a strange being of wonder and power, claiming an other-worldly origin, heralding a catastrophe. And the school itself has arisen in a reaction against the unnaturalness of the materialistic Christ. And, secondly, that other school which sees that miracle is so deeply bound up with the New Testament narratives that it cannot get rid of this at all if they are historical in any way, and so it boldly takes the other horn of the dilemma, and denies that Jesus as a man ever existed. Professor W. B. Smith, I think, in America, Professor Drews, and, to some extent, Professor Jensen, all maintain this. But the other objection to the liberalised, non-miraculous Jesus of

Unitarians and Rationalists is that it entirely fails to account for the facts, which are facts, of the existence of the Christian Church and the blood of the martyrs and the lives of the Saints, of its endurance throughout the ages, and its actual power in your and my experience.

Nor, again, can this figure produce what the sinner needs, peace and strength. This coldly passionless moralist and maker of aphorisms may form a very good ideal for respectable people living in the suburbs of London and of University towns, but twice ten thousand times over must we say that religion does not exist for respectable people. It was not made by them or for them. It is made for bad people. "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." And to us, sick with sins and struggling with passion, rising only to fall, and steeped with memories of evil—to us, I say, it is a mockery and a lie to give this bloodless professorial abstraction the place of the living, loving Saviour who rose from the dead and gives Himself in the Eucharist.

Ah, beware! I pray you beware not only of the open Antichrist of last Sunday week's

consideration, but of the jejune parody of the Gospel Christ, which is the creation of academic pedantry and modern comfort. This boneless Christ of the German liberals, this "transient, embarrassed phantom" living in vain and dying in disillusion, is not only incapable of producing the mighty fact of the Christian Church, or the mightier one of the converted soul, but he cannot even maintain that lofty moral ideal which is by some supposed to be the sole residuum of Christianity.

How little of the Christian ideal, as it has been set forth by Christ and imaged by the saints, is likely to be preserved apart from the Christ of the Creeds you may judge from an essay by a personage eminent in place and in abilities in our Church, in a recent volume called "Facing the Facts." Writing upon religion at the universities, this dignitary, of whose brilliant abilities I would speak with all respect, bids us look for the one hope of the future in what? Gentlemanly manners! How nice. This is what has come of the heroism of Polycarp and the endurance of Athanasius and the rich personality of St. Augustine! This is the issue of all the

missions and all the martyrs, and all the mystics! This is the final result in our own Church of the gracious wisdom of Hooker, and the sublime insight of Westcott, the other-worldly wisdom of Wilkinson—the manners of a modern gentleman sitting, as the writer says, loose to the ecclesiastical Christianity of Greece and Rome, and using our Lord's Name in order to decorate an ideal of good taste!

Instead of the New Testament, which, together with the Fathers, is to be discarded as the loot of the Roman Empire and Palestine, we are to have a class code of honour, despising all efforts to raise the disinherited to a decent living, and treating the heroic times of the early Church as the era of the "bottle and the rattle." It is not surprising that such a view leaves little hope in its author of the outlook for the world.

For this is the final fact. It is we who have the promise of the future. We have the new, the living, the hope; the great adventure of the world is ours, not theirs, these people who sit in their studies and weave their theories in their easy chairs. The forces of civilisation are imposing; but apart from Christ they are

visibly dissolving. Its tall towers are shaking, and the splendid spires of the edifice of the western world are crumbling. Catastrophe is threatening. We can almost hear the thunders of the avalanche of war—war on a scale unknown. Hardly does the world even look stable any longer. It is not like the forties of Victorian complacency, but looks all tottering—tottering. Even the intellectual fabric is not enduring. Fashions change in philosophy. Science does not always say the same thing. The critics have built up their whole position—not all critics, but those of whom I am speaking—from an intellectual backwater trusting to a philosophy which has become obsolete, and a notion of science which its most distinguished representatives are now rejecting.

It is we—we with our faith in freedom and our hold on power—we who have got hold on this thing, this strange frail flame of something beyond, we who have the future, the new; we have the secret of "the joyful wisdom" of the universe. And we are not to be disheartened. We shall see all these things crumble if we only hang on. Ours is the romance, and the power, and the strength,

and that which shall make things new. For we alone have faith in a world beyond us of real living spirits, in a Christ who rises and lives to save and help, in a grace that is real, in a God who is alive.

# A GREAT DOOR IS OPENED[1]

"A great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries."—1 COR. xvi. 9.

WHEN St. Paul wrote these words, he prophesied the enduring condition of the Christian Church. We know now how great and effectual that door was. Looking into the past we read unconsciously into it our knowledge of what then was future; and we talk as though the subsequent triumphs of the Church were almost independent of the men by whom they were wrought. The actual accomplishment of the ventures of faith blinds us to their antecedent improbability. Humanly speaking it was nothing but the faith and courage of St. Paul that saved the Church from being a small Jewish sect, and made it a universal power. If you will only try to transport yourself in imagination to the world in which he lived, you

[1] Preached at All Saints', Margaret Street, on Sunday, May 21, 1911.

will see how hopeless, from all commonsense standpoints, must have appeared the task he had set before him. We know that world almost as well as we know that of any day but our own, for the life and literature of the Pagan Empire is familiar to us, and the peoples of South Europe and Asia Minor, living secure if materialised lives under the Roman peace, are much better known than any other. No social atmosphere in history is as easy to breathe as that of the early Empire.

And even of that specialised section in it but not of it—the Jewish race—we know a great deal. It was into that secular, comfort-loving, complacent, and in a sense, highly educated world, that the Faith of the Cross was to come with its strange secret of "power made perfect through weakness," and its tale of sin forgiven and the Risen Lord; while in the Jewish people, strong in their sense of God's election and passionately desiring a political Messiah, a prejudice as violent, though different from that of the Gentile world, was, it seemed, an insuperable bar to the faith in a beaten criminal, whom His followers declared to be the King of the race. Whichever

way you look at the problem of winning the world for Christ, it might have well seemed impossible. And yet what St. Paul feels is the enormous greatness of the opportunity. Precisely how much he foresaw of the future triumphs of the Church we cannot tell; that he saw something is evident from some of his more exuberant utterances. But one thing is certain; he knew that he had a great work to do, that he was going to make a difference to the world, and that, provided he kept his courage high, he had before him conquests of unimagined splendour.

He felt that Christianity, even in its inchoate form, was the biggest thing in history; though he knew that it might be rendered small if its disciples lost heart.

BUT—and this is what we are to note—he did not blind himself to its difficulties. There is a certain fanatic or hysterical temper which sees its own goal so brightly, that the light shuts out all that comes between, and it has neither knowledge nor care for any obstacles. This unthinking enthusiasm was not the gift of St. Paul. He knew perfectly well the nature of the struggle before him—how could he fail to know it, a man whose ex-

perience included such things as those recorded.

"Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. Are they Ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches."

Such a man might go on in faith and courage, but was hardly likely to suppose that all was over but the shouting. Nay, rather his was that acute insight which led him to see the difficulties more clearly, through

his sense of the grandeur of his task. It was just because he knew the door was so great and effectual that he realised the multitude of his adversaries. As he said elsewhere, there were enemies not only in the world about them, in the pride of the Jews or the lust of the Romans, but in that encompassing army of spirits, whose reality he at least did not question. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

He knew that the powers alike of this world and of that beyond, so far as they were evil, felt the stress of the combat and would leave no stone unturned to determine its issue. That is the thought which I wish to bring before you, the fact that a great opportunity always goes with great difficulties, and that we have no right to expect the one without the other. You cannot conquer the world without fighting. You can do nothing great if all you do is little. Even in business great fortunes are rarely made except by those who take great risks; and no splendour of achievement has ever been possible without blood

and tears. If you want smooth walking and easy going, and pleasant pictures, and all things nice you can have them, at least in some degree, but you cannot have at the same time the joy of conquest, the thrill of adventure, the sense of greatness.

What is true of other kinds of life is truest of all in religion. You cannot have the heights without the depths—and faith itself, in any real sense, is impossible to those who are not tempted to doubt; and remember it is just when, like St. Paul, you are most conscious of the greatness of the end before you, that you will be most tempted to give up the task as hopeless—just because it is so great. The lover's first thought is that he must go and hide himself, he is so unworthy, so little, that it makes it positively absurd for him to aspire to the great boon of another's response. And we are God's lovers—at first we cannot think how He can want us, care for us, or what use to Him we can ever be. He may save our own miserable souls; that perhaps we have learnt. That He can really use us, want us, that we can help Him, to say that is an insult to God and a mockery of us. Ah! it is not so—for God chooses strange instruments, and

why He wants us we need not ask, we are sure that He does. The work will not be done if we draw back. "For God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty."

But this is not all—God may want us but men don't, that is certain. They don't want our Gospel, they dislike our ideals, they despise our credentials, they laugh at us as the bearers of any message. They do. There is no doubt about it. And I think they will do so more, not less, than they have done. If the whole world, as St. John said, lieth in the "evil one," it is no wonder that it is hostile even to the very name of Christ.

My friends—you know that this is true of our day, you know that the Cross of Christ has, never since its early days, been so much an offence, that the Gospel of Christ has never been more openly flouted; the very person of Christ is now often mocked and scorned. Open enmity has at last, thank God! taken the place of veiled dislike and scorn of indifference. We know what we are in for, you and I, when we profess the faith of Christ and Him crucified. There is enough around us in the daily and obvious facts of the world

to appal the stoutest heart, and in the intellectual world there is hardly a week but some book is published which may shake our faith. And yet on that very ground I think we are right in saying, not that Christianity is a past episode, not that it is a spent force, but that to us a grand hope is given, "*A great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.*" It is easy enough, you know better than I, to conjure up fear—we are all tempted to be cowards. But as Mr. Bernard Shaw says, no man can be a hero who is not also a coward—you cannot conquer terror if you never feel it. Faith is the great thing that the world repudiates; and faith is perhaps the hardest grace for any of us to maintain. And yet faith is the one thing our modern life needs, to give some unity to its medley of chance desires, some thread amid the unintelligible maze of life. If we have faith it may be true of us as of those of old: "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our 'faith'"; only it must be a real faith, a fire burning at white heat—it is no tepid acquiescence in an existing system, which can meet the demands of our restless and critical time, but a will and courage refined

by pain and tempered and annealed with all the fires of the spirit. You know the story of the Valkyr, Brunhild, how for an act of disobedience she was set to sleep under a tree, to be the bride and prey of any who could find her. Fearing to be the victim of a coward, she begged of Odin one last boon, that none but a hero should win her. Granting this he surrounded her with a ring of magic flame, terrible to all sight, and able to frighten any but the bravest, only a man with a hero's heart could break that barrier. Is it not so with us? There, asleep under a tree, lies faith, half woman, half goddess, the bride of man's soul. She is ours for the winning, but she must be won, she cannot be easily embraced, we must pass first through that magic flame which surrounds her, the fire of doubt, the strength of criticism, and that whole notion of a world scientifically determined and non-miraculous which lays hold of men's minds just as though it were a magic flame. Only, as we have strength to face these things; only through God's high gift of courage, only through the great gift of faith, can we hope to win or even retain that lovely bride of the soul—the Catholic faith.

People more and more want to have the pearl without the price, like the inheritor of wealth which rests on the fruits of other's battles. More and more that is proving itself impossible. If you want faith you must pay for it, and if you want the Catholic life, you cannot have it without the Catholic faith.

But oh, my friends, if this faith were ours; if instead of fitful glimpses, we had in our souls that inextinguishable flame; if God should come before us with that great gift and the power to see, that sense of the things of the spirit as the supremely real thing now; then at this moment, for us, too, a great door and effectual is opened, for us there are chances of converting others, of bringing souls to Christ, by being set forth as a gazing-stock, but also a light to bring them home to the haven where they would be; ours once more would be that faith which is "the victory that overcometh the world."

# THE ASCENSION [1]

"Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."—
COL. iii. 3.

RARELY, even in the New Testament, do we meet words so pregnant as these, and they form a fitting subject for our musings at Ascension-tide. The Collect prays that we may in heart and mind ascend and with Him continually dwell. It is as dwellers with Christ in that world beyond that we Christians face this life. We are sharers in the life of the Lord, risen and ascended; that is our cachet, our note. That is what puzzles the world in us. It can measure and understand the moralist or the Deist; it can classify, according to familiar categories, the statesman, the financier, even the student or the philosopher and the man of science; but in the Christian there is ever something elusive, surprising. Men cannot understand this, and are irritated by a presence which they feel but cannot grasp. This strangeness all

[1] Preached in the Octave.

springs, in the last resort, from this fact of our sharing in the hidden life; we have been beyond, seen behind the curtain, and, as it were, are come back from another place to do our little tasks in this. That is the meaning of the Christian, what he stands for. He is one who has been beyond, has come back. Even his mere commonplace outward life is charged with a new meaning, and all his hopes are centred in a different sphere. It is not figure but plain fact that Christians live as sharers in that Ascended life (provided, of course, the story of the risen and ascended Lord be based on fact).

Our faith is in a Christ who is alive, sitting on the right hand of God the Father; we live (as Christians) through union with Him. His life comes into us, and we, in some sort, to Him (I suppose that is why He is grieved so deeply by the sins and weaknesses of His own children). In all personal bonds, in every social connection there is a communion; that is, a mutual interpenetration, of spirits. At this moment the humblest member of a slum family, poor and in rags, is feeling the thrill of the life that pulses through the Empire. The King (so to speak)

is His property, and so are all the kings who have gone and are to be.

The small new boy at a school believes the conquests of the eleven to belong to him, and so they do. That little cap with the school colours he donned only a few days back is a symbol of the change that has come with this life; that he is no more John Smith, but John Smith sharer in this common life of a social union that, it may be, has bright memories and always has great hopes. He is a part of the great pulsing life, so separate, yet so absorbing, of many other boys, and he is a different person from what he was; for they and their hopes and fears, their failure and success, their powers and also their limitations are now part of his life and he of theirs, and he can never be the same again as if it were not so. You can readily multiply instances from college, or regiment, or profession, or parliament. When a man writes M.P. after his name he is not thinking only of the few hundreds of living individuals, mostly plutocratic mediocrities who make up any existing House, he is thinking, or at least meaning, all the generations of noble and eloquent men whose life he begins

to live, and in his first speech it is not only himself who speaks, but, however feebly, it is Eliot and Pym and Wentworth; it is St. John and Harley and Pulteney and Walpole; it is Fox and Pitt, Disraeli and Gladstone. So when I am privileged to preach in this place, I do not feel that it is just the same I who may preach elsewhere, but rather it is the saints, priests and laymen, men and women, who in the past have here found God; it is the prayers and tears of penitents, alive or otherwhere; it is the achievements, the hopes, the romance, and the God-seeking praise of all who now work here or worship; all these enter into me, they are part of the place and cling about its very walls; they are part of me as I come here, and without my choice (even when I do not think, or, perhaps, desire it) they are all speaking through me and pointing home. This is the law of the sociality of man, it is the ground of all worthy political life, of all education that is not a sham, and it is the meaning of the Communion of Saints. And shall we not apply this same law to the sphere where it is above all things pertinent—our life in Christ?

His ascended life it is that moves and breathes in us. That gaze as from afar of the man who has been behind the grave and come back shines in our faces; in every act we betray our intimacy in a home which is closed to others. Let us think of one or two ways in which the Ascended glory should transfigure us. First I think there is that great quietness which is the bottom of the Christian life. The Ascended Christ is at rest, His victory is won, although in another sense His work is always proceeding. It is not the rest of indolence, but the calm at bottom of intense activity, which comes of a will at ease, a rightly centred spirit. It is that rest that we share. More and more, as I go about and compare the faces and the demeanour or even the writings of those who have this life in Christ from those who lack it, it seems that there is this profound difference. The one set of people has at bottom peace and the other has not. Look at the restless, fevered art, the chaotic, tortured literature of our day as provided by non-Christians; think of the lives of the best of them consecrated by high purpose and perhaps exceeding yours in sincerity; think of

their attitude, however noble, to pain, to death, and to bereavement, and can we not say that the peace of God, which we believe to be ours, is just what they so patently lack? As sharers in the Ascended Life we need, then, to cultivate by prayer, by meditation, by Eucharistic worship, this quiet of soul, this rest in the silence which preserves peace amid all activities, and gives background to our irresponsible chatter—chatter that is the curse of our day, chatter in our books and in our tubes, in our clubs and in our studies, talk with no object and no meaning (except to stave off silence). Now chatter in the sense of talk for amusement is quite desirable if it be in due proportion to our work. That the Christian has; he is the only person with a real right to a sense of humour. But no one can do other than deplore that life of mere superficial chatter—carried on, it may be, even in the affected form of soliloquy—that utter oblivion of the depths of life by many to-day; I think the oblivion is only partial, it is rather a chosen shutting down of thoughts which it is feared will bring only misery. For it is to the pessimism and worry of the world, without

Christ, that we shall find our antidote in the Ascended glory. I believe that doctors regard worry as a cardinal disease of the age, and it is our business in every way to fight it. "Life is not a thing to sing about," said a young man of good position and prospects the other day—that is very natural for a non-Christian.

But if anyone has a right to sing about life it is we, redeemed by the Blood of Jesus and sharing in His risen life. The "joy and peace in believing" of which St. Paul speaks were a fact in the early Church, they have got to be so to a far greater extent in our life to-day. Perhaps we might some of us do more for Christ by an arresting gladness of spirit and a constant quiet, than we effect by all our more strident activity. The strenuous life is all very well, but the quiet life is its true basis, and until we have the one, the other will only degenerate into fussiness.

It is these things, quiet and gladness, that will surprise people. As I said at the outset, they have got to be surprised, they are bound to think us strange. Indeed we are a wonder to others: is not our life a constant wonder to ourselves and even perhaps to God? They

cannot make us out, how should they, they are amazed at our refusal to go under and credit their triumphant demonstration that there is nothing in it, that it is all but the shadow of a dream; but we know that our life is solid with the life behind the veil, of the Ascended Lord and the countless Saints who share with Him, and there too do we continually dwell—we are a part of Jesus. When we talk of the Church as the body of Christ, we mean something, it is not mere symbol—we are the outward expression of the mind of Christ—we collectively, however greatly we may fall short as individuals. Only we must not be content with the collective holiness of the Church, any more than a schoolboy or a soldier would be content with the collective manliness of his society; he has got to show courage himself.

Every day, then, as we pray or fast, as we take up the Cross, harder not easier as time goes on, as we love, or give or suffer, must there shine through each one of us these gleams of the Ascended Life—that joy, that peace, that conquering and abounding life which belongs to those whose home is beyond.

# ALL THINGS ARE YOURS[1]

"All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."—1 Cor. iii. 22, 23.

Strange words to a society, half of whom were slaves. Their rare eloquence invests them with a universal appeal. Yet, though we may set them high as prose, I wonder whether many of us have thought much about their meaning. For longer than I can say I have felt their beauty, but it is only lately that a little of what they mean has seemed to dawn on me.

What do they mean? What could St. Paul have had in his mind, when he told a body of despised and unimportant persons that all things belong to them; both this world and that to come. One thing is certain. These words were not mere rhetoric to the writer whatever they may be to preachers, who find them impressive to quote. When

[1] Preached in Peterhouse Chapel, Cambridge.

St. Paul made this astounding claim, at variance with all apparent fact, he was not thinking of rounding off a period. Let us try and enter into his mind.

Firstly, the words clearly indicate that in any true sense the legal possession of objects is not their owning. For instance, a serving-maid with real love for line and some slight sense of colour might have a truer property in a Madonna of Raphael or Botticelli than her Philistine master who had bought the picture because it was expensive. St. Francis of Assisi, the *poverello*, was wont to say, that he had greater joy than the owner in the riches of King Louis. For the king only delighted in the objects, but the Saint had joy in the king's joy. What constitutes true ownership even in material objects is not the parchment title, but the power to appropriate them in our experience. Everything is in some sense ours which we can make into a part of our experience. For instance, a stray visitor to this place, who used his time well and by sympathetic imagination entered into its life and its million memories, might own more of Cambridge than some dull and uninspired alumnus who merely got up his

subject from calculating motives and used great gifts to win a secure position.

Now the reference of St. Paul's words would seem something of this sort. In the world in which he lived, what above all things distinguished the Christian society was the Resurrection hope. He was writing to men who "look for the Resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come." Compare their thoughts with those of men without that hope. Other-worldly some will call them. So they are. The quality of the supernatural always clings to the Christian, provided his faith be real, ἡμῶν δε το πολιτευμα ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοις.

Yet if he is other-worldly, he is also this-worldly. Only one with an undying destiny can be at home even in the world of sense. Every one else is a stranger. The world is his enemy. He must snatch from a hostile and reluctant universe such fleeting joys as he may, for he is but the creature of a day. Far from being a citizen of the world he is but a bubble on the stream. The world in no sense belongs to him, he belongs to it. He must have his hour and be done. "Our days on earth are a shadow, and there is no abiding." His knowledge, his experience, his

hard-won character, all are vanity. They are of no use to him. "There is no work nor device nor knowledge in the grave whither thou goest." They are not truly his. Indeed there is no real he; merely a passing appearance in the ceaseless flux.

"When you and I behind the veil are passed;
Oh, but the long, long while the world shall last,
Which of our coming and departure heeds
As much as Ocean of a pebble cast.

One moment in annihilation's waste,
One moment of the well of life to taste;
The stars are setting and the caravan
Starts for the dawn of nothing—oh make haste."

One so placed cannot call the world his own, though he owned all the millions of Mithridates, for he cannot make them fruitful, meaningful to him. Their purpose is determined by the grave.

"Oh! make the most of what ye yet may spend,
Before ye too into the earth descend;
Dust into dust and under dust to lie,
Sans wine, sans song, sans singer, and—sans end."

Now let us look at the opposite side of the picture. To the Christian, the man with an eternal hope, every part of experience is an element in a being that knows no dying.

The tones on the hills, and the seas, the songs of the birds, all the wonder of the skies,

> "With ever a new surprise,
> And clouds eternally new,"

all are his, he can make them his own; by scarcely perceptible gradations they become part of him. They are his for ever. As I stand in this chapel, and there stream in upon me the broken lights, the blue and the brown of your incomparable east window, as the memory stirs me of the noble thinkers and joyous lives that here have bowed in reverence, as I recall the image of one here, the first of my teachers in this University, which I love with every fibre of my soul, as I garner the remembrance that this building, if not itself the oldest, is yet the Church of the oldest collegiate foundation in Cambridge and carries the mind back to what was in some ways the greatest age in human history—the thirteenth century—the very flower of the art and life of the Middle Age —these thoughts united make up an experience so tender and so rich that it becomes a part of me: that is, if I truly exist and am to go on; otherwise it is indifferent whether I

last ten or twenty or forty years. This instance brings before us in a figure the way in which, in regard to all human affairs, the Christian "possesses the earth" in a way none can who have not the hope of eternal life.

So far, then, from its being true that a purely evolutionary account of the world gives us a deeper hold on the life of the universe, the fact is precisely the contrary. If there be nothing but a universal flux, then for us, who are but phases of it, alike as individuals and a race soon to sink into nothingness, there can be no real possession in the past or present of the world, even though for the nonce they enter into us. Only as the individual goes on, as he is something more than the product of the past, can he truly enter in and possess the treasured memories of mankind or the promise of the future. Man is the "heir of all the ages." That is true. And all culture, all education worthy of the name, is little more than an attempt to render that truth vital to the individual. We throw ourselves into the past that we may command the future, and use the fruit of other experience alike in bodily, in mental,

and in spiritual development. We learn to sympathise with other peoples and different ideals, in order that we may the better understand our own. By taste and training we enter into the beauty of the world in order that our minds, being sensitive to every influence, may be alert and vivid. But all these purposes are vain if we ourselves are but the bubbles on the stream. We cannot own, possess the past—that is, make ours the inheritance of humanity—unless we have some power over it, some ideal end, to which it all serves. This cannot be, save in mockery, if we are to end all in a flash, and the race itself for which we work is to vanish with the cooling of the sun.

Ownership means permanent right. What ownership can we have of the experience of the race or our own lives, what title or property is there in any form of knowledge, of any joy in art, of any depth in love, of any high passion or pictured perfection: what power in it is ours, "if all we have is an interval and our place knows us no more"? If we "are all *condamnés*," if to "this short day of frost and sun" there dawn no morrow, then I question whether it be worth while,

as Walter Pater suggested, to spend ourselves in order to "expand this interval, gathering all we are into one desperate effort to see and touch." For were this true, were there no world beyond to look to, then it is more than doubtful whether even for an hour love were worth having. To quote a writer, now the target of enlightened scorn:

> "But if some voice that man can trust
> Should answer from the narrow house,
> The cheeks drop in, the body bows,
> Man dies, nor is there hope in dust.
>
> Might I not say 'Yet even here
> But for one hour, O Love, I strive
> To keep so sweet a thing alive.'
> But I should turn mine ears and hear
>
> The moaning of the homeless sea,
> The sound of streams that, swift or slow,
> Draw down æonian hills and sow
> The dust of continents to be.
>
> And love would answer with a sigh,
> The sound of that forgetful shore
> Will change my sweetness more and more,
> Half dead to know that I shall die."

It is all very well to say that "art comes to you professing to give nothing but the highest quality to your moments as they pass and simply for those moments' sake." It does

nothing of the kind. The only thing that can make the moment worthy is its sharing as one element in the life of immortal spirit. If indeed the moment's sake be worth the agony of the artist, and for that high quality the poet is to dream and the musician to listen and the painter to gaze, then I say that fact alone proves the moment to have something in it more than momentary; to possess some quality more abiding, and in a great mystery to mirror the eternal in the transient. Yet all this is meaningless and vain apart from that blessed hope we have in Christ Jesus our Lord. We need not, I think, to-day consider a belief in personal immortality apart from the Christian faith; it is not sufficiently widespread to be of any account, and is indeed largely a survival.

On the whole then, so far from its being true that the Christian gives up all human joy in order to sun himself in an unreal Heaven, he is in reality the only person who has any true title to enjoy the wonders of the outward life. Men talk of the unity of history. The man who really feels it is the man who kneels in penitent humility to receive the Eucharistic gift. Or rather, others

may talk of the unity of history: but the Christian lives it. At that supreme moment, for him are combined the thoughts and experiences, the heroism and the failure of the race and all its outlook for the future. But this is not all. That moment is to him so precious because it unites him not only with those of his fellows who serve God, but also because it unites the seen and the unseen, this world and the other, the greatest joy of earthly love with that "glory that shall be revealed in us."

Great is the spell of knowledge. Nobly alluring and desirable is the charm of beauty. Beyond all things to win are the gifts of a loving heart and a spirit at peace. These things, however, are only real, can only be held as worthy by him whose feet are firm on a rock, who feels at home with reality, because he knows that for human love there is an enduring object and for all experience there is a purpose that shall not die.

# GOD'S LOVE AND MAN'S RESPONSE[1]

"We love Him, because He first loved us."—ST. JOHN iv. 19.

THERE is in men a certain instinct which makes them seek to be loved. Even the most selfish and tyrannical will resent the feeling that they are not loved, and often will be unable to understand why. True, we meet now and then with characters so proud and self-centred that they demand of their fellows nothing but service. So long as they can make themselves feared, they reck little of being loved, and even take a certain delight in being hated. Besides these, we have some who from temperament and a sense of duty maintain themselves in isolation. The Stoic believes that in his wisdom and virtue he is beyond the reach of so vulgar an emotion, and neither feels nor desires tenderness. Even among Christians we come across this

[1] Preached in Westminster Abbey.

false ideal, so alien from the sweetness and humanity of Christ; and it may comport with the austere detachment of a certain type of saintliness, both Puritan and Catholic. But it is rare, and the effort which it needs to maintain it stamps it as against nature. On the whole, speaking for the mass of men (and the Gospel deals with the average man), it is true to say that man is a loving being, and that his commonest fault is in loving unwisely, not loving too well. Even the adventurer driven by his own ambition is no exception; he may be willing to sacrifice to his desire for wealth or power or distinction much of the chance of loving, and, so far as the world is concerned, some even of the hope of being loved. But all that is very much on the outside. There is always a fireside corner, a home of the spirit, in which love is the ruling principle; to this, whether wife or family or chosen friends, he constantly returns, forgetting alike the noise of his achievements and the memory of his crimes in a quiet rapture which is to him a symbol of the peace beyond understanding.

To this instinct, the need of being loved, it is which the Gospel appeals. This is what

gives it its wonder and grace, and makes it different from its rivals. Many thinkers have taught men; many prophets have roused and stung them; many captains have led them and brought them by paths that they did not know to goals undreamed of; the supreme gift of Jesus to men is simpler and more universal—just love. Just think what it means to wear His colours. The Christian as such is not a man of virtue, he may even be very far from virtue to the last; but he is a man of love. Christ came "not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

You can be a Christian and yet have astonishingly little, as people say, to show for it; no one who knows you would call you a good man. You may have lived a bad life or been very selfish, or dishonest, or impure, or proud; and you may have overcome your besetting sin by no means wholly, for conversion does not always mean holiness, it does mean love. Perhaps all you can say is that you hope some day to be freed from these powers hostile and terrible. At present you do not know; you can but cling to the skirts of His garment, in hopes that He will heal you, little as you are worth it. But yet so subtle and alluring is

the tempter, so weak has frequent failure made you, that you can offer to Christ no power of grace, no formed and efficient character, no balanced mind; nothing, nothing at all of those powers, which help men to work for God, nothing but just this, this poor flower —your love. Like a child who brings one in a hot, dirty hand, a bunch of crushed and nearly withered violets, and gives to you to hold, you give to Jesus this poor bouquet—your own love. You can do that; you do love Him. Those who say you do not are liars. The world may laugh at you. Looking scornfully at your past and perhaps at your present, it may ask what you can do—you are nothing but a disgrace to the Christian name; is it not an insult that you put yourself on a par with those who have borne the burden and heat of the day, and expect to receive that payment which is all their reward? And what can you say in reply? "It is all quite true. I have done and been what you say, and worse too. Even now I am a coward; I cannot fight His battles like you; I cannot 'Stand up for Jesus,' as the hymn says; I am no good at all; but I am here—with Jesus. This one thing I can do, or rather I cannot help doing

—I love Him. Say what you like to me. Pull up your skirts as I pass; drive me from your assemblies. But one thing I know, whereas I was blind now I see. Henceforth I have the vision of that gracious Friend in whom all loveliness is mirrored. It may be that of me, too, some day He will say what long ago He said of another, 'Her sins, which are many, are forgiven her, because she loved much.'"

This is what makes the difference, isn't it? what separates us from other men, and unites us, if we only realise it, by a bond that is deeper than all the barriers, real though they be, which are set up by race and social training, by breeding or virtue, and by intellect and education—the last and the hardest barrier of all. We Christians are men who love. In other religions you can find men who worship; in some of them in the East quite a number who make prayer their life. Under many different moral systems there are those who sacrifice all and shame us by the depth of their renunciation. Often do we meet outside the Christian Church men of virtue, of high standards, and noble integrity. In ours alone is there this rare aroma, that we are

lovers of a living Lord; Friends is the beautiful name of a sect that did much to restore tenderness to an age full of religion and empty of love. Friendship: that is, the quality, the meaning of our religion and all our Church system, and all our elaboration of services, all our sacramental life, the grace of Holy Baptism, the beauty of the Eucharist, the tenderness of penitence, the courage of Confirmation, and the joy and strength of priestly office are but so many symbols of this one fact, so many facets "of the diamond heart unflawed and clear, the whole world's crowning jewel," the friendship between man and God. They are but helps to make us enter more vitally into that song of praise and joy of which the shepherds heard the refrain in Bethlehem, whose echoes are still sounding for those who have ears to hear.

God's love and man's response—that is the meaning of our life as Christians. And it is God's love, the kindness of God our Saviour, that comes first; "we love Him because He first loved us." We are surrounded, enwrapped in this love. It is so close, it envelops us so completely, that for many of us it takes a long while to discern it; and when we do, it

comes with all the force of a discovery, just because it was "closer than breathing, nearer than hands or feet." He seems so far above, and we are so little, that we cannot believe it. Have you not sometimes had a friend in some one far removed from you—some one above you in station, your employer or chief; some one above you in age and knowledge, your teacher or your master; or some one of like age and standing, but above you in gifts, perhaps attractions? You have admired them very much and perhaps learnt from them? Then one day something done or said has revealed the truth, and you have found that they care, just care for you; that you are not merely a case, or a hand, or an item in their work, but that you, as a person, you being yourself and no one else, with all your faults and your insignificance; that you matter to them; that they care about you. Has it not made a world of difference? It makes you yourself a better person, for nothing individualises like love. And has not this knowledge made things easy which before were hard, and enabled you to do and bear a great deal more? And then comes another thought. You are anxious to show them something in

return and please them; if the thought were not absurd, you would like to help them. But they are too far above you, and you cannot do that, you know. You can love them, and that is all.

But that is not all with God. We can love Him, and help Him too. That is the wonderful thing; the strange truth that makes one almost shudder with joy. Not only does God let us love Him, but He will let us help Him, give Him something; give, too, not a little, but the best we have, all made better by the giving; more, too, give not only what we have but what we are, "ourselves, our souls and bodies, a reasonable holy and lively sacrifice," and so make God happier. Has it ever occurred to you what it means—you can make God, make Jesus, happier? We are often told that our sins, our pride, and wilfulness make Him miserable once more; that we renew for Him Gethsemane, and drive those nails deeper. We do. But also we can make Him glad, can help Him, make it easier for Him to do His work, His never-ceasing work of saving the world, and bring a fresh note of joy even among the angels in heaven.

That is all that I want to say to you. We

must love Him. We cannot help it, because He loves us. If some gracious and attractive nature shows love to us we must love him back; as soon as we realise the fact we cannot help ourselves. For a long while indeed, through pride and wilful ignorance, we may not know that He cares, and so live as if He did not, or we may fail to see how beautiful He is and not care whether He loves or not. So long as a person is unattractive, or indifferent to you, you do not mind, as you put it, whether he likes or dislikes you—you do not know and you do not care; he is nothing to you. But once you have caught the attraction, once you have seen his beauty of spirit, or gifts, or power, or whatever it is that has held you, he is no more indifferent, and you would be glad to know that he takes an interest in you. That is what God does; He takes an interest in us, and all our life is aflame with the fact. How it happens that when we know this and love Him too we can shame Him, as we do so often by our pride and lust, by our greed and cowardice, or by mere forgetfulness and distrust, I do not know. But we do. Yet even that He puts out of sight, because His love is an everlasting love and knows no bounds.

And so it comes to this. We have to help Him, to give Him presents. You know how it is, if you do not care about people, and you have to give them a wedding-present. It bores you; it seems such waste of money. And you go off and buy in a hurry just the cheapest sugar-bowl or dish that seems at all decent. Anything will do that will do. On the other hand, nothing will do, nothing seems good enough for any one you greatly care for. You are apt to spend more than you ought on gifts, you multiply opportunities, you make excuses, you are often quite wrongly extravagant, and give what you need for other purposes—give, perhaps, instead of paying what you owe. Now, cannot we be a little more extravagant in our gifts to God? (I am not talking about money, though for many people that is a very good test of reality.) But every day, every hour almost, we can be giving something to Jesus. I know I do not do this, but I have just begun to see that I ought, and am intended to do it. Make Him a present—some pleasure, personal or selfish, we give up; some sorrow or humiliation you can turn into joy and strength for His sake; some evil thought we put away, we

give it to Him, just because He loves us and does not like it; some hard piece of work we do just to please Him; some brave discipline, some bad fight we face, because we are His friends. I know it is all very hard, and perhaps we shall fail. We may have enough pluck to go into the fight, and then past sins or a fresh fall may give the victory to the other side. We are not all intended to give Him success; we are all intended to give Him our efforts. Perhaps the only thing we can say is, "Lord, I have failed; I did my best in vain: but I did try. I have been beaten, but it was for Thee." Give Jesus success, if it comes to you; high sacrifice and great results, if you win them. But if not that, if you have only scorn and humiliation and grief and self-contempt, you can give him that. Which was it, failure or success, He Himself gave His Father on Calvary?

And we do not know when success is really near. When you seem at your worst perhaps you may hear the cry, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." For He sees what you cannot see —like the commander-in-chief on the hill, who sees triumph when the common soldier

can only discern ruin and despair. Triumph may be very close when you imagine defeat inevitable:

"Say not the struggle nought availeth,
The labour and the wounds are vain;
The enemy fainteth not, nor faileth,
And as things have been they remain.

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars,
It may be, in yon smoke concealed,
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,
And, but for you, possess the field.

For while the slow waves, vainly breaking,
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far off, thro' creeks and inlets making,
Comes silent, flooding in, the main.

And not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the light,
In front, the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
But westward, look, the land is bright."

# THE GREAT ADVENTURE[1]

"It became Him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through suffering."—HEB. ii. 10.

THE Cross has the secret of all adventure, and God is the home of the soul. These two topics, the satisfying in Christ of the needs of man alike for romance and for abiding peace, may form the matter of our thoughts these two Sunday mornings.

To-day let us consider the way in which Christ satisfies and strengthens all the motives that spur to adventure. There is in man an inexhaustible desire for new experience. Comfort may surround him, and security, yet he burns for new worlds to conquer, though he die in the process. He must leave the domestic and sheltered order and journey to a far country. Even the children cannot be content quietly to walk the streets, but must

[1] Preached at All Saints', Margaret Street, W., on the first Sunday after Trinity.

risk their limbs in attitudes distressing to timid relatives. Youth despises the counsels of prudence and sails far seas for gold. The middle-aged cannot rest with his gains, but risks them in speculation, or at some game, its feebler imitation.

The spice of hazard, the excitement of the unknown, the irritation of the merely secure, the need of something splendid and strange—this there is in all lives that are full-blooded.

We are ever lured by the impossible. We are weary of achieved success, and feel that we can only live in one sense, if in another we die daily. We are all more or less like that symbol of the wandering spirit of man evoked by the poetic instinct of an early age, Ulysses, who started once more on his travels even in his old age, even though we find in many passages the proof that in distressful circumstances his heart sank within him and he was constantly vowing that peace was his only desire. As one now nearly forgotten and unfashionable makes him say:

> "I cannot rest from travel. I will drink
> Life to the lees: at all times, I have enjoyed
> Greatly, have suffered greatly, both with those
> Who loved me and alone.

I am a part of all that I have met,
Yet all experience is an arch where thro'
Gleams that untravelled world whose margin fades
Forever and forever as I move.
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnished, not to shine in use,
As though to breathe were life: life piled on life
Were all too little; and of one to me
Little remains; but every hour is saved
From that eternal silence, something more,
A bringer of new things; and vile it were
For some three suns to store and hold myself,
And this gray spirit yearning in desire
To follow knowledge, like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bounds of human thought."

This insatiable desire for new experience is the flame that burns in all knight-errantry that ever was. It is the soul of romance and the secret of immortal youth. You can see it through the whole of history. You can read it in the "Chanson de Roland," in those ancient stories of the knights at Roncesvalles, or in Scott's words:

"O for one blast of that wild horn,
On Fontarabian echoes borne,
The hero's dying call,
That told imperial Charlemagne
How Paynim's swarthy hordes of Spain
Had wrought his champion's fall."

The voice that cried for the wild horn is

found in every quest in history. It leads us on from such simple things as a movement like the Boy Scouts to the Cross of Christ. It is the eternal knightly element in the world luring men on no less than "the eternal womanly" of Goethe. And I say that this spirit finds its meaning, reaches its highest achievement, and gets the whole that it can out of us, only in the Christian life, only for those who bear the Cross.

It is Jesus who bids us die to live. He says that we can only save our lives by risking them; that self-possession can only be ours by self-giving. As one of those who tried has told us, "In the Cross is safety, in the Cross is life, in the Cross is protection from our foes, in the Cross is infusion of heavenly sweetness, in the Cross is joy of spirit, in the Cross is perfect sanctity, in the Cross is the sum of all virtues." Or take St. Paul. No man had a stronger will and character. None more utterly gives the lie to the Buddhist notion, becoming fashionable once more in the West, that our personality ought to be extinguished by love. Love, so far from extinguishing the self, heightens and deepens the spirit, but it does so because in

order to be ourselves we must give ourselves away.

What is St. Paul's account of his life? "In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience and in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in strifes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in watchings, in fastings, by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report, as deceivers and yet true, as unknown and yet well known, as dying and behold we live, as chastened yet not killed, as sorrowful yet always rejoicing, as poor yet making many rich, as having nothing yet possessing all things."

That is the shining paradox of the Christian life, and it is also the paradox of all life. You must "give all for all." You can never win any kind of peace or self-possession unless you have risked all to get it. Ask yourself for one moment what have been your feelings on the eve of some act involving courage, whether it has been courage physical as it is commonly

called, or moral, or intellectual. You want them all. They are all one. What has happened to you? If it has really called forth courage, have you not felt something like this? "I cannot do this. This is too much for me. I shall ruin myself if I take this risk. I cannot take the leap. It is impossible. All me will be gone if I do this, and I cling to myself."

And then supposing the spirit has conquered and you have done this impossible thing, do not you find afterwards that you possess yourself in a sense that you never have before, that there is more of you? Is not that true of every single act that has involved courage in your life, I do not care what it is? First it seems impossible, that it means the giving of your whole self, and you cling to yourself and cannot do it, and very likely you don't. But supposing you do, supposing you get over this terror, then at the end there comes back to you a great possession of the spirit and you know you are something different from what you were before, and something more.

So it is throughout life. You know that if anyone told you on going to school that nothing would ever hurt you, it would have

been a lie and an insult. You know that a career which has no tight places, no lonely hours, no agony, and no desolation of spirit, is no career for a man. You cannot learn if you will not suffer. You know that our life on earth is ennobled, not by absence of pain, not by cushions of ease, but by the richness and variety of experience, and that all true living knits pain with joy, and by courage turns suffering into the very matter of delight. You know that "nothing venture nothing win" is true in every hour, the fibre of every experience that is to sing itself into memory. And if you do not go at this call it will hiss itself into memory instead. For no kingdom was ever won without battle, and are you to expect a meaner level in the Christian life? Rather, the Cross is before you at all times. It raises you higher and drops you lower than any other service. St. Francis called his mates not only the troubadours but the knights of God, and they were the one because they were the other. The mystics talk of the Saints as the squires of the eternal wisdom, who are "to ride with Christ, their lovely forerunner in the lists."

That is the choice He offers us all. Christ

does not say, "I will give you nothing but ease, no fresh troubles, no new experiences, no difficulties for your faith, your practice, or your love." Rather He tells us, as He told St. Paul, how "great things we must suffer for His Name's sake."

Throughout the New Testament the Cross is shown blazing with gems and glorious to win, but it must be won. It would be no crown if it had no thorns. You cannot win honour even as an athlete if you are not willing for a little to suffer. You can achieve no laurels in any career if you will not scorn delights and live laborious days. In every art and calling it is the same. Victory may be had, but you must pay for it, and the man who wins most is the man who has elected to suffer hardest in that battle.

You remember how Gwendolen in *Daniel Deronda*, when she thought she had lost her money, having heard herself much praised in drawing-rooms as a nice singer, went to her German professor and asked him if he thought she might make her own living as a professional. He told her, "You do not know what you ask," and proceeded to explain that if for several hours a day and for several

years she would go through a great deal of drudgery, sing when she did not want to sing, and sing the things she did not want to sing, there was a possibility that at the end of it she might make a small income. I think she decided to do something else.

That is the choice of us all in life. It is our choice in religion. You must take either the adventure standpoint or the insurance standpoint. Are you resolved to make the great gamble with Christ as your leader, or do you want the humdrum and philistine respectability of the man who never gets high because he never goes low? If you follow Christ He will lead you by paths that you know not. I grant it. What is He going to do with me? you may ask. Where will this great love take me? I know not. Once the passion of Christ has hold of you, and you are a sharer in the secret of the world, redemption through suffering, through love, then your course can be calculated by no astrologer and no horoscope can enable you to tell the future, for your orbit has passed beyond the ken of man and you will do more and less than you imagine. "I cannot tell," you may say, "what will become of

me in this great quest." Quite so. You cannot. God may use you for a little and then ruin your health, or He may take all your goods, or He may give you work that is drudgery and unprofitable, or He may shine upon your life with success and even popularity. I cannot tell. You cannot tell. You are His, not your own, and if you give yourself away, you cannot be as though you were your sole master.

All that can be said is that your life is big with possibilities; it has changed its colour. From being drab and dull it is now dipped in the ocean of love, which encompasses the world, and has suffered a sea-change into something rich and strange. It is all before you—"a wonder and a beauty and a terror," every step impossible and yet the step to be taken.

People talk of the adventurer who sets out to open the oyster of the world. So does the Christian; only, it is a larger oyster. It is not greatness of success, nor greatness of goodness, nor greatness of fame that you can have by taking the Cross. Very probably you will have less in one sense even of virtue than if you had served yourself. But you

have this greatness—that true greatness of soul, because you have given it to God. For each man lives by the greatness of the spirits whom he loves, and we live by the greatness of God.

So your life is going to be newer than other people's. There are going to be very fresh things in it, for the richest and most various of things in the world is love. And the riches of human love are to the riches of divine love as a pebble to the Himalayas.

This week we are thinking especially of that great gift that comes in the Holy Sacrament. Think of what that means in the way of new beginnings, fresh experiences, space and vistas in our life. And so with meditation and prayer. Some one once said to me that prayer ought to be a substitute for holidays. Perhaps that was over-statement, but it has much of truth in it, for the Cross is the romance of two worlds, and it affords the secret of all progress here and all reality hereafter.

Do you remember the small, famous picture that hangs in the National Gallery by the great Raphael—Madonna? There is a knight asleep on the ground and the picture is

divided into two by a tree, and his dream appears in the shape of one beautiful maiden, who points to a landscape of rivers, woods, pleasant lawns and flowers, and of beauty and delight; and on the other side there is another, a woman of austere aspect with a sword in her hand, and she points to a landscape of steep places, and precipices, and hard climbs, and castles and deep rivers, and enemies to conquer. The knight is there to choose.

We are like the sleeping knight. We are set in the fire of choice to choose between the smooth and shaven lawns of life, merely decent, and the hard hurting facts of the Cross, and the nails and the blood. Remember this—the Cross hurts. It is not a mere ornament wherewith to decorate our altars or to hang on watch chains. If, like the crusader of old, you take the Cross, be assured that you will often wish you had not taken it. You will faint by the way and cry like him in the wilderness, "It is enough. Take away my life for I am not better than my fathers." You must have the Elijah gloom if you would have the prophetic glory. And it is not at first that this agony is felt most, for

after the first plunge is made it seems easy and so glad a thing to be a hero. By and by you will get tired, and the gladness is gone, and the romance is worn off, and it is grey and chill, and you are all alone and very weak, and you do not know what is to come next and you wish it were all over.

Is not that the case with all education and all development and all learning? It is more and more utterly the case with the Cross of Christ, because that means the agony not only of body, but of soul and of spirit as well. And in some way we must all echo the Gethsemane cry, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me."

God sets us alone that we may be fully ourselves and so fully given to Him. It is so easy to see oneself heroic, so hard to bear the actual Cross. I remember when I was a child, for some quarrel with my brother he had been forbidden to go that night to see some fireworks, our annual joy. Proudly I said, though still allowed, "I shall stay with him." That sounded very fine at 6, but at 8 o'clock, it seemed dull and at 8.30 it looked simply silly, and at 8.45—I need not detail the rest. I think that when my father said, "So you

went after all," there was expressed in it the spirit of what our dear Lord must feel very often when He has to say to His friends, "Could ye not watch with Me one hour?"

But remember how he went on, "the spirit truly is willing though the flesh is weak." He will be patient. He will make allowances for us. He did not think we were so fine as we thought we were, or so bad as we feel we are. Perhaps He means us to learn in this way to be humble. We like to be grand and heroic. Now we know we are nothing. It is He and not we ourselves who is really to bear that Cross.

# THE HOME OF THE SOUL[1]

"Thou God seest me."—GEN. xvi. 13.

THESE words have been familiar to us since we were very small. They are the utterance of a truth, comforting to many another soul, like Hagar, alone and suffering, or watching by the pains of others, and they form the fitting complement of what we talked of last week.

Then we saw how the Gospel satisfies one great instinct of human nature: the desire of adventure. To-day I want to dwell upon the opposite aspect. For equally strong with the love of adventure is the need of home. The youth longs to be up and doing; he is for casting off all fetters. He is not going to do things just because his elders do them; rather he will do the contrary. He will improve upon the past. No dead hand of dry tradition shall interfere with him. He will seek fresh

[1] Preached at All Saints', Margaret Street.

woods, will change a hemisphere to win an El Dorado; in reality rather that he may get away and be free, than for anything he will get out of it.

And yet, and yet, all the while he has within him this other desire. Some image of a quiet home, some spot where he can rest in spirit, where the little pieties of the soul can gather, even amid all his wanderings, something that draws him, not because it is new, but because it is old, about which there clings that immemorial pathos that belongs to whatever has touched life for long. It may be thoughts of his parents, or the love of some sister or younger brother whom perhaps he did not treat as well as he might when they played together; or perhaps of the school where he was bred, or those years to be remembered but not repeated at college; or the church to which he went reluctant, or the cadence of an ancient hymn; or even it may be the scents of some old garden.

The strange contradiction of man, that he wants at once the old and the new, springs from a nature which is both the inheritor of the past and the hero of the future of the

world. For man cannot own the future, cannot conquer it if he have not the desire of the new. But neither can he make plans if he is not to use the past. Otherwise he is the mere sport of caprice and lives but from moment to moment like a butterfly. He needs both; the long memory of the past gathered into one in his will, in order to direct himself towards that which is new and strange, and to labour for the uncertain. Authority and freedom, change and order, tradition and novelty, domesticity and adventure, romance and routine, the strange and the normal, these jostle one another for ever, not only in the world at large, but in the heart of each of us. They are part of our being as developing characters, and neither instinct may be starved or Nemesis will come.

Half of the great emotion which has thrilled into one the millions of the Empire this Coronation week we have gone through, springs just from this same sentiment, this love of the old things, this sense of unity with our fellows, this desire of home, and this reverence for those symbols of honour and tradition and inheritance which set forth that

desire and make it shine as stars to men. That is what the Crown does. It gathers as into a star all the different rays that spring from the millions of men on fire with the light of home.

Why is it that such a pathos hangs about the simplest rustic scene—a waggon in the afternoon light with peasants loading hay, and children playing round about, and tired horses sweating in the sun? There is a scene with a beauty that never grows old, because it is never new. There is a charm that no time can cancel, which clings about the symbol of the life of mortal man: toil and the need of quiet rest at the day's end, the fruit of suffering, and the unity of all in common needs. There we feel the force of those immortal words, "Sunt lacrymae rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt." That touches the heart like Millet's "The Angelus," or a child's shout as the train passes—it always brings something like tears to me as I see that—or the inscrutable eyes of a baby; for such sights make us feel at one with our kind. They rebuke the pride of adventure and the strength of youth, and bid us know that we are but men:

"Why should a man desire in any way
To vary from the kindly race of men,
Or pass beyond the goal of ordinance
Where all should pause as is most meet for all?"

What makes up this desire for home, this love of the old and the traditional? Partly, I think, it comes from the instinct that craves to be at one with our race, partly from the need of love. Often it is said that what makes home home-like is love. It is this nostalgia of the adventurer, even when his romance is at its height, this need that some one should care, that some one should be glad of his good fortune, or, even better, proud of his brave strokes and in lower moments should sympathise with his gloom—that is all simply the need of love; for according as he is ruled by self or by love is man's individuality base or noble. Either it is a home or else it is a prison.

The spirit of adventure, of courage, if left to itself, may lead merely to a proud self-assertion. It may make a man admirable, but hardly human, for it brings out but one side of his nature. It may make a character noble and austere, but profoundly alone and without sympathy. Its ideal has been set

forth by Matthew Arnold as he addressed the stars:

> "Ah! once more, I cried, ye stars, ye waters,
> On my heart your mighty charm renew;
> Still, still let me, as I gaze upon you,
> Feel my soul becoming vast like you.
>
> From the intense clear star-sown vault of Heaven,
> Over the lit sea's unquiet way,
> In the rustling night-air came the answer!
> Would'st thou be as these are? Live as they.
>
> Unaffrighted by the silence round them,
> Undistracted by the sights they see,
> These demand not that the things without them
> Yield them love, amusement, sympathy.
>
> Bounded by themselves and unregardful
> In what state God's other works may be,
> In their own tasks all their powers pouring,
> These attain the mighty life you see.
>
> Oh! air-borne Voice! long since severely clear,
> A cry like thine in my own heart I hear:
> Resolve to be thyself; and know that he
> Who finds himself loses his misery."

Quite true! Yet nobody ever finds himself if he does not give himself away in love and surrender. That is just the difference made by the Gospel. "The moral man's life is a monologue, a soliloquy, a religious man's is a dialogue," said George Tyrrell. He has his

home always with him as nobody else has. As our Lord said, "I am alone and yet not alone, for My Father is with Me." This instinctive desire for home cannot be satisfied by any earthly love or any purely human intimacy, because it cannot endure. And even though it be so strong that it conquers absence, it cannot survive death unless there be a life beyond.

We cannot be at peace through and through unless we are in touch with the secret of the universe. Is this world to us something strange and foreign, or is the ultimate principle of things of such a nature that we can be intimate with it? Is God, the Maker of all things, so near to us that we can talk as a man talketh to his friend? And remember that talking with a friend needs no words. I have heard it said that conversation is a breach of confidence; when you know people you do not need to say anything. If that be so, then, however frightening things are at the moment, and however deep the anguish of our struggle, we need fear no evil, for He is with us, His rod and His staff shall comfort us.

And this sense of intimacy with God ex-

pressed, one might say, externally in the twenty-third psalm, of close touch with the secret of things—it is this that nerves the Christian and makes him able for so much. It has been truly said that while the natural virtue of courage is a quality of the robust, religion gives it to people the most timid. We can all see this in the world around us, in the courage of the weakest and the achievements of the least capable of people in the Name of Christ. People who are so made or trained that they seem to do much, or to be able to do much for Christ, have often to bow in humble reverence before those whom naturally they would despise as poor in character and weak in ability, yet do more simply because this fire has filled them. It may be a deed not of heroism, like the life of Father Damien, but something quite unknown, by some poor lad in the slums, or some unknown, obscure assistant in a shop, or some unattractive woman of monotonous occupation. The live coal from the altar has touched their lips, and made that possible which seems to human insight absurd.

And the source of their power is this: that our troubles are not to be faced alone. We

are not to be brave men scaling the forts of a hostile universe. We are children who are at home, sons of the house of life, and able to wander about it. The world belongs to us in a way that it cannot do to others. What I mean is this: upon the non-Christian theory of life you are indeed alone in the world; you are, as it were, an enemy, and have to fight it for a foothold. You are not even a leasehold tenant, but you may have at any moment to quit and give up all. No spirit that does not believe itself immortal can truly be at home even in this life. He may belong to the world; the world cannot belong to him, for he is a mere eddy on the stream and must always be a stranger. So far as he feels this, his attitude to life must be that of an enemy, who tries to make what he can out of this terrible world which has borne him only to extinction. He may stand erect and proud, but he cannot be at home.

Now, the Christian believes himself to be in touch with the eternal at every moment of his life, and more than that, he is the object of care. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us." We are in touch with the flame that burns at the heart of

things, for, indeed, somehow or other there must be a wonder, a mystery of unfathomable splendour, more than words can express, at the heart of life. And it is alive, this wonder. I think that even we Christians do not think enough of God as life.

Well, that life is not alien from us. "That light, whose smile kindles the universe," is our Friend, and however we may wander, and choose all empty or foul delights, still there, or, rather, here, is the Father, calling us home.

Like the prodigal son, some of us never feel the need of home until we begin to be in want and are fain to fill the belly with husks. Wrapped up in our pleasures and self-secure, we live as though this Friend were not. You know how sometimes two persons may live together and yet never feel at home, never know one another. Or perhaps between two people once friends there yawns a chasm of estrangement, and although they may live and eat and sleep in each other's company, they are parted by a gulf wider than all the distances of the stars. It is just one little thing that changes a life of which all the outward incidents remain unaltered, and even

the words and gestures of affection may be unchanged:

> "Oh! the little more how much it is!
> Oh! the little less and what worlds away!"

In Meredith's poem, "Modern Love," we have a noble expression of such estrangement, founded, it is said, on actual fact. And sometimes the gulf is all on one side, and the other is yearning, trying, longing for a return of the old intimacy. Yet he can do nothing; he can but wait. You cannot force affection; and just as the spiritual chasm is deeper and more real than any material gulf, so no mere desire upon one side can bring back to a lover his lost mistress, and yet his heart remains ever open if the loved one will come back.

So, indeed, it is with our Father in Heaven. That "heart of the Eternal that is most wonderfully kind" is ever waiting, yearning, thinking of us, and the instant we change, His mercy opens arms, and opens them easily and humanly through the ministries of His pleasure, the visible home of the Spirit, the Church, the atoning Blood made fruitful, the grace given and all the peace.

For this sense of friendship with God is not all. The Gospel ministers to this instinct of the soul, its desire for companionship, in other ways. It is only in society that the soul of man really grows. The notion of Puritanism that the soul needs no human mediator at all between itself and God, though it has much truth, is very largely foreign to the facts. In nine cases out of ten God's love comes to us through the society of others. The Christian at home with God, intimate with the secret of things, is not intimate as an isolated unit, but he shares in the life of all the Saints and worshippers of God in the past. He is surrounded by a cloud of witnesses, and has for his help not only the prayers and tears of those he knows but of countless Saints who have gone before. It is not a far-off God whom he petitions, but a present Saviour and a family of friends.

I have not, this morning, time, though it is germane to the subject, to go on and draw out how the whole of this instinct of home, this love of ancient things, because human life is attached to them, all that instinct which, as I was saying, unites us in loyalty to the King and Crown—all finds its fullest

fruition in our sense of membership in the Church. It ought to be said because it belongs to the same subject, but there is no time to go on with it at length, and I dare-say that many of you know better than I can say what it means.

But it is true that as we have felt a little this sense of union with our fellows in the great stream of national life which goes back for so many centuries, so in our religion there is a much higher sense of union and of home in that great society, that wonderful stream of life that goes back to Him who hung upon the Cross, and beyond, right through the Jewish Church to the very dawn of human life. All this fills us with that sense of power and peace which belongs to a spirit at rest, a soul that is in union with the Power that is at the bottom of all things, rightly at home with the life of his fellows in society.

"Ye are not come to the mount that might be touched and that burned with fire, not unto blackness and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of the trumpet and the voice of words. Ye are come unto Mount Zion, unto the city of the living God, to the

Heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly of the Church of the first-born, to God the judge of all, and the spirits of just men made perfect."

# CHRISTIAN HUMILITY[1]

"Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?"—1 Cor. i. 20.

It is not the stains, it is the graces of the Christian that men find repulsive. To the world without, humility, in our sense, is ever a target for scorn. Not long since a statesman boasted in France that he would eradicate the degrading ideal of Christian humility. To-day we witness on all hands the vogue of a philosophy of pride which contemns our aim as slave-born. We are not to regret this. It is well to make bright the opposing spirits which live in the kingdoms of this world and in the Kingdom of our God and His Christ, well to rend all disguises by which the world may masquerade as the Church, or *vice versa*. The Bampton lecturer of last year set forth this distinctness of the two orders, and the ill results of the long confusion between them. Even more lately an eminent divine of Non-

[1] Preached before the University of Oxford.

conformity has spoken of the fundamental heresy of all as that which confuses the Church and the world. But that is over. We are like to be cured from these perils in the days now dawning; but it will be so as by fire and in spite of ourselves. By its own act and deed the world is abandoning a patronage no longer expedient, and self-conscious infidelity is triumphant in epigram. All this is the natural issue of freedom, and a ground of rejoicing. The Church will gain in intensity more than it loses in extension. For after all Christian life was then at its healthiest, then Christians were most truly the salt of the earth, when to men they were the offscouring of all things, a scanty band of God-struck souls in a world hostile and contemptuous. More and more do we to-day approximate to that condition; as our life is in many ways curiously akin to those intellectual and moral forces of anarchy which sapped the moral energies of the Roman Imperials.

But if once more we are set thus as a gazing-stock and may no longer presume on the general acquiescence, it behoves us to make something of our distinctness, lest we should

be like that salt which has lost its savour. We must know what it is—this wonderful secret which is ours alone and wins the gibes of men like lovers or madmen in a callous crowd. Now this differentia will, I think, be found in Christian humility rather than in Christian purity, or even love. It is obvious in any case it is something we are trying to be, not what we are, that makes the difference and that is the aim which is least like those of other men. There are many among unbelievers who cling passionately to Christian morals, and even more who, like the Positivists, would uphold an ideal of love and sacrifice. Far other is it with humility. The nearest apparent approach is among the Oriental systems, yet these parallels are delusive. Buddhist and Hindu humility spring from a sense of the evil of life and the transience of the individual. The Christian doctrine, while it castigates pride, enhances personality; it declares at once the dignity and the degradation of man, the glory of his destiny, and the shame of his condition. Woefully lacking as we Christians may be in this grace, at least we pretend to admire it, and none else, but bespatter its very name. Once, however, we

do admire it, once we see that humility is the peculiar and crowning grace of the Church, and we shall expect to find ourselves behaving in every sphere of life in ways different from the world, and that even when the world is most sympathetic. This difference we must accept and not try by accommodations to attenuate; it is part of the cost which we count, deeming that the pearl of great price, the treasure of the soul, is worth more than a king's ransom. Let us trace out some of the forms of this distinction.

Our thought as Christians must bear this mark. It is the note of the Churchman that he does not guess at truth; how can you guess when the answer is given? He is no philosopher "voyaging strange seas of thought alone"; he is not on an intellectual pilgrimage; he has come home, he has got there. He is not an adventurer, but the recipient of a gift. It is no mere *Weltanschauung*, it is the gift of eternal life, which Christ communicates; doubtless that gift brings with it other things, such as a transvaluation of all values, and implies certain views of the universe. Still we cannot too often remind ourselves that this is our secret; we have got some-

thing other folks have not got and we did not get it for ourselves. The whole of theology is but a drawing-out, an explication of this gift "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

But this is not the notion of the world—even of the religious world. Far from it. To the ordinary man religion is the uprush of human life, towards the beyond; it is not the response to a call. The world at this moment, so far from being irreligious, is greedy, clamorous for religion, and quite uncritical if only some new Prophet shall preserve for it some of these values which religion assures; so deep is the repulsion for the soulless materialism of the last age; so bitter is the sense of the vanity of mere culture without religion. It is sheer blindness to say that men have no taste for religion in an age when even a Mrs. Baker-Eddy can secure millions of disciples. But in all these movements there is one condition: "Religion; yes, we want it, we must have it, but it must be we; it shall be ours, ours to make, ours to judge; not God's plan, the great fact." We spurn as idolatrous the superstitions of the past; there is no age that has ever worshipped its own fancies as ours, none which is more super-

stitious. Talk of men not desiring religion; they are ready at this moment to do and believe anything, however wild, anything except one—receive the Kingdom of Heaven as little children. How should they? "Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Jordan?" Bid the uneducated to wash and be clean! We are moderns, and know better.

In nearly all our discussions, so widespread and reverberant, men seem unaware that Christ comes into our life—as indeed, do other persons—as a given fact which we are free to take or leave, and may develop; but there is always something that evades our analysis, something beyond our most ingenious formula; and besides He is there, there by right of His being and not of our thought or will. Half the doubts which lacerate us are due to this; we are trying to subject Jesus Christ to our intelligence as it stands to-day, to squeeze Him into our categories, and to reject all that runs counter to what, in a phrase as ugly as the thing, we term the modern mentality. That is the vitiating assumption of such works as Father Tyrell's *Christianity at the Cross Roads*, and other books less

persuasive. There is no hostility here to Christian ethics, and deep and reverent love for Christ; but it is we, not He, who are masters and shall give the deciding; we sit ourselves on the judgment-seat, all the while protesting a deathless allegiance. We want the Christ life, the Christ love, the Christ hope it may be, but one thing we do not want—whatsoever our words—we do not want *Jesus as Lord.* For if He be Lord, we are but servants; where then is our independence? We have surrendered and are now men under authority; and to be under authority in the highest sphere is what may not and ought not to be borne for a moment by any modern educated person. We "the heirs of all the ages in the foremost files of time," how should we put up with ecclesiastical authority?

Yet we are wrong—wrong even by the ordinary lines of life. Facts are always authorities; education largely is made up of learning that. We have to take them as given; and even when we partly analyse them, we can never get the whole—there is always something unexplained; they never get themselves expressed in their entirety.

You may try for a lifetime, but you can never give account of a single colour or a single pain which quite conveys it to those who do not know it by sympathetic feeling. That revolution in our natural knowledge which we associate with the name of Bacon meant merely the taking this attitude of the recipient, the learner, instead of imposing mere speculations on the world around. It is the same with personal life and human history; the Christian accepts them, the man who takes over from science generalisations valid only for normal events in the physical world, and stretches the inner life of man or the fluctuations of peoples on to this Procrustean bed of mechanical causation, gives a picture unreal, and belied by the experience of every living man. There is the authority of Nature on the one hand, the authority of our own inner life on the other—whether we can harmonise them is a question; that each is a fact cannot be denied. Quite similar is the authority claimed for Christ and His Church; it rests upon the strangest facts in history, constantly corroborated by converted souls to-day; and Nemesis overtakes him who repudiates these and say they cannot

be. He lives in what is spiritually an unreal world, as do the majority of unbelievers to-day, and its unreality is daily more apparent in the profound dissatisfaction and restlessness all round us. The truth is that the only person who has any right to reject authority is the solipsist; his position is logically unassailable; yet the facts against it are so strong that no reasonable man can hold it. You can get rid of all claims to authority if you are alone in the world, but you do so at the cost of adopting a wilder and more fanciful speculation than the wildest dreams of the gnostics.

But this is not all. The claim to make the modern mind the final judge is pure assumption; it assumes that that mind, if not omniscient, at least leaves out no valid source of knowledge. Just the opposite is the truth. The Christian Church, the Christianity of the New Testament transcends it, and runs counter in a hundred ways, and this is at last being realised. Nothing is more noteworthy than the collapse of the attempt to reduce within normal limits the life and claims of Jesus, and the origins of the Church as an experience. Whatever we think of those

claims and that experience, their other-worldly, supernatural, Apocalyptic character stares us in the face, and so also does the strange success which attended them, and its relations to the culture of the day. The words of St. Paul, "God hath made foolish the wisdom of men," testify to the sense that the Cross and the Risen Lord and the Holy Spirit were as strongly opposed to the common notions of what was likely, and no less abhorrent to the men of culture than is the Nicene Creed to-day. It is now clear that we cannot maintain the title of Christians unless we are willing to give up some of the arrogant claims to decide what does not happen, which makes part of the intellectual furniture of "ordinary men" to-day. I suppose it all depends on whether we prefer the attitude of writers like St. Paul and St. John, or that of our modern cultivated world, which supplies us with novels and magazines. Personally, I prefer St. Paul. It is an argument not against, but in favour of the Church that she makes a claim totally different from such as animate writers like the authors of *Jesus or Christ?* or *The Churches and Modern Thought,* or even the *New Theology,* or the *Simples Ré-*

*flexions* of M. Loisy. The spirit of an age always finds outward expression; we live in ours—Do we like it? Not here, perhaps, in this siren city can we fully realise it; her charm comes from days when men believed. But what of the triumphs all around us of the time spirit? Do we seriously desire a universe amenable to that mind which sends its bagmen and its shoddy goods to the banks of the Ganges or the Nile, and crowns all by erecting a hideous watering-place, piers, and second-rate restaurant on that incomparable stretch of sea-shore where Byron and Shelley once rode together, with the Adriatic on one side and its Queen upon the other? Inwardly too, as we look, does the restless fever, the empty ambition, and the worldly striving of our day, with its lust of gold and love of show, give any evidence of satisfaction or any norm of wisdom? Nor are our weary intellectuals, a Wells or a Hardy, a Gissing or a D'Annunzio any better off. Everywhere there is the same tragic refrain—lost, lost, lost, cries the world, as it strives either by work and ambition or by thought and culture to do for the nature of man that which can be accomplished only by

Him for whose delight we are made. For man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever; and all others are vain at the last. No! the modern world, with its thousand oppressions and its commonplace sins, or the modern man inebriated with the exuberance of his own intellectuality, is in need of salvation no less than those Greeks to whom the Cross was foolishness. Of course it was; to the man who needs redemption and knows it not the Cross must be a silly thing, for it means a change of his whole being, and cannot begin till his pride be shattered.

But do we—that is the point—do we need redeeming? it is only a world which by itself is lost that has (in the current phrase) any use for a Crucified Saviour. If it be that we have power of ourselves to help ourselves; if the works of righteousness which we have done could save us, we might still delight the inward eye with the vision of God or find in the Risen Lord the source of boundless knowledge. But it would be luxury, not necessity, like the Mystics' rapture, beautiful and enthralling, but only for a few. It is the fallen nature of man, and that alone, that reveals to him hope in the Cross; only those

who are tortured with an inner contradiction can rightly welcome that death which brings peace to them that are far off and them that are nigh. Not for our knowledge and delight, but "for our salvation He came down from Heaven and was made man"; all the difference between the Christian faith and its opponents is symbolised in these brief phrases. It is not the showing, but the doing; not the revelation but the Atonement that is the vital reality for us sinners. We need just now to reaffirm this. The wisest Churchman of the last age, Mandell Creighton, was apt to say that men had erred in giving this truth the second place and laying all the emphasis on the Incarnation. Whether this tendency was wrong in its own day, we need not ask; probably it was needed. But its work is done. What may be called the Alexandrine age of English theology has passed or is passing. And now we need above all things to insist on "the Cruciality of the Cross." Christianity is a religion of deliverance, of escape, or it is nothing; it is to a world in sad case that we are sent, not to a pleasant cultivated Eden, watered by knowledge and beauty and charmed with pleasant

sounds. Jesus is Lord; Lord because he is first Saviour, and it is as Saviour that we need to think of Him—that word that is almost old-fashioned. It is partly through our neglect of this that men have been encouraged in that attitude of critical self-sufficiency of which I have spoken. So long as we treat the problem as one of mere "showing," a view of things, we leave a loophole for those who declare the view to be outworn. Intellectually climates alter, but there is always sin; it is to conquer sin that Christ came. The Pharisee changes his shibboleths with the fashion, nor would he speak to-day of fasts or tithes; but the cry of the Publican knows no changing—"God be merciful to me a sinner," rings true now as then. Even eugenics and the cry for the superman are proof of our ill condition. Only as we see the ravages of sin and the ineptitude of most schemes to do away with it do we see the need for a deliverance that comes from without. To men without this sense of sin, the claims of Jesus, if true, are not vital, and are probably without meaning. It is not because I am good and have noble thoughts and lofty ideals and delight in

God that I come to Christ; it is because I am bad and my struggles are vain and He died there on that Cross to save me—me and no other—that He is my Saviour and my Lord.

It is not of authority or humility in the abstract that we need at this hour to speak; the world is in no mood to listen, and only dubs us obscurantist. Before we can make headway we must convince the world of sin. Men perceive all about them its results, yet they assign them to every cause but the true one for the reason that they have not looked into their own hearts. Get them to do that, get them to see also the emptiness of mere culture and the bankruptcy of science if it tries to make a theory of things. Thus, and thus alone, will they be ready even to see the manger and the Cross, the tomb, the Christian story with its elaborate simplicity and its weird super-naturalism, its dying Deity, its intimate humanity, all centring round one figure—that "strange Man upon the Cross." Get them, I say; no, rather get ourselves, you and me.

I have been saying that Christian humility is rooted in two facts: the Godlike nature

of man and his actual corruption; its splendour and its shame. But it is not enough to argue in favour of this or to preach it. If we as Christians are to set forth this grace to men, it must be by possessing or struggling to possess it. And there is but one way to win this treasure—you must seek it at the foot of the Cross; you have to go down to the bottom and go again and again. It is a Christianity without penitence that is the supreme evil of our day and the source of our thin and flabby religionism. Men cry against confession; it saps independence. It does. It destroys that false self-assertion which is the supreme enemy of faith, and that is why men hate it. Confession makes humility, at least for the nonce, a necessity for the penitent, and shows him what he is. I do not say but that other methods do this; this is one. Precisely similar is the concomitant dislike of Sacramental religion, for the Sacraments emphasise the outsideness of God's grace, its coming as a boon, and not as a result of our aspirations, the reward of religious sentiment. And men dislike them, for they think to do all for themselves. Not because they hide, as some falsely boast, but

because they reveal the beauty of Christ's Cross, are these things attacked.

Only as we ourselves have felt these needs, only as we have been down to the bottom and lie beaten in the dust, can we set them forth to others. Then there will come that outbreak of power for which we long. There is no such source of energy as love; and man's love to God is not the readily maintained, agreeable feeling that some imagine; it is a fitful flame, kept alive by long effort. The force that kindles it into strength is this sense of pardon and peace. It is "she to whom much is forgiven who loves much." It is as we are like that woman who washed His feet with tears that amid the doubts and frightening enmities of the world and our own yet more appalling weakness, we can be brave in that battle against sin, the world, the devil—to fight till life's end and never surrender. The Cross, as it is the source of our pardon, is also the beginning of humility, and the mainspring of sacrifice.

"When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
  Save in the cross of Christ, my God;
All the vain things that charm me most,
  I sacrifice them to His blood.

His dying crimson, like a robe,
  Spreads o'er His body on the tree;
Then am I dead to all the globe
  And all the globe is dead to me.

See ! from His head, His hands, His feet,
  Sorrow and love flow mingled down ;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
  Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
  That were an offering far too small ;
Love so amazing, so divine,
  Demands my soul, my life, my all."

# THE LIVING GOD[1]

"He is the living God."—JER. x. 10.

MOST men are willing to believe in God. The word sounds impressive. It is touched with certain associations of the sublime which make it effective to turn a phrase—or an oath! Even Algernon Charles Swinburne, who openly professed atheism, used the word God in his verse probably more often than any other poet—and used it with great effect. Atheists pure and professed do indeed exist. But they are not common. Or rather, they prefer to hide themselves under some other less uncompromising term such as agnostic.

Yet the name God signifies of itself almost nothing. It is frequently used as a mere decorative symbol of the universe. As Dr. Bussell puts it: "It is thought by some to be a philosophical achievement and an act of creditable daring to call the sum of things God." Since everyone but an absolute sceptic

[1] Preached before the University of Harvard, first Sunday in Lent, 1911.

or a solipsist believes there is something beside himself, he can, if he be so minded, dignify that reality with the name of God; and so far call himself a theist. Such a sort of religion, however, is of no avail to the common man with his hopes and fears, his failures and passions, with his trembling aspirations and inner unrest. A God to him, if He is real, must be living. A mere impersonal entity—"a sort of a something"—probably unknowable, is as good as no god. What such a man wants, what his inmost nature demands to be assured of, is a God who is so far personal that there can be an intimacy between Him and the sons of men; that while close to us, "closer indeed than breathing and nearer than hands or feet," He is yet distinct. He does not want the Pantheists' God of whom he is so much a part, that God cannot speak to us but only in us. To be "lost in the all" may be a high aim for a philosopher, but would give no thrill to a washerwoman. Nor does he want the sceptics' "infinite and eternal energy," a thing in itself so far removed from all his thoughts, that no converse is possible, and prayer becomes a mockery and revelation unthinkable. Whatever be the case with a

few sheltered students, happy in research and aloof from the turmoil of the world and all the tragedy of sin, with the tired men and women at work, with the boy at school, the youth at college, with the lover and the explorer, and all those who share in the great gamble of life, religion—*if they want it at all* —means communion, intimacy, between two beings conceived as persons. I say "conceived as persons"; we need not ascribe to God personality precisely like our own. We may admit much of what the agnostic asserts about the inadequacy of our categories. "To whom then will ye liken Me; or to whom shall I be equal, saith the Lord." We may, if we please, say that God is supra-personal, so long as we go on to say that, so far as He is known to us, we can treat Him as personal rather than the opposite, which is impersonal; and that we can be free of His society. No less than that is the view of all to whom Theism is a reality.

Now what distinguished the Jews among the nations was not their belief in God, but their faith in Him as a living God. This is the burden of the Old Testament. It is thunderous in the oracles of Sinai; it judges and values in the mouths of the prophets;

it rises into calm rapture in the Psalms. The Hebrews indeed never gave way to that narrowly anthropomorphic notion of God which we see in the stories about Ares and Aphrodite, or Thor and Odin; yet they were not ashamed or afraid of ascribing to God a heart of tenderness, and a power of righteous wrath—which (however inadequate the term) doubtless corresponds to something real at the heart of things.

But this is not all. This belief alone furnished the atmosphere in which the revelation of Christ was possible. It was because the Jews had so strong a hold on the livingness of God, *i.e.* on His nature as spiritually active, that Jesus was able to persuade men by His presence both of God's Love and His own sonship. The devouter minds were already imbued alike by inheritance and personal religion with the belief that God was living and active, so that they speak of Him, in the words of one of them, as "God who at sundry times and in divers manners hath spoken to us by the prophets." And be it remembered that it is this same writer who declares elsewhere that our *God is a consuming fire.*

A consuming fire. Surely if God be at all, if He be alive, and not dead (as many even orthodox persons still picture Him) He must be a fire, in the heart of reality, so terrific that we cannot by any figure present it to the imagination. What was revealed to men in our Lord Jesus Christ by His consciousness of unbroken union with the Father and still more by His dying on the Cross was just this: that this fire at the heart of things is a "living flame of Love"; that God is no serene Olympic Zeus, gazing at the amazing spectacle of things, reckless and secure; He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities and actually suffers for us. They are right who say that a suffering God is of the essence of Christian Faith.

Other creeds place God above all human suffering, aloof and apart, the pitiless triumphant Apollo; or some impossible Absolute. Christians have sometimes borrowed from philosophy language which implies a lack of sympathy in the Father. Yet it remains true that our Faith rests on the belief that God revealed Himself to man with most piercing truth at the moment when Jesus hung helpless on the Cross; that not His life, nor His

words, nor His works, nor even His consciousness (of which just now we hear so much), but that one selfless agonised offering, that costly and priceless gift it was which purchased our freedom by revealing God to man as One who cares—and showing that we have not to live as strangers in a foreign universe.

This notion of a living God it is which is being questioned on all hands, and we Christians are now on our defence. In the first place, this is the real meaning of the miraculous, which a Philistine and obsolescent intellectualism would have us surrender. What is it that miracles assure us of?—just of this, the aliveness of God. A world in which there are no miracles, no unique events, but everything unrolling itself in mechanical continuity, is not a living world at all. It is a dead machine grinding out music according to a formula. All was fixed, according to some, at the first appearance of matter (or whatever is to take the place of matter) and everything since then, including you and me, is the inevitable result of these forces, moving on towards their predetermined event.

"With earth's first clay they did the last man knead,
And there of the last harvest sow the seed;
And the first morning of Creation wrote
What the last dawn of reckoning shall read."

That view is belied by all life. All very well on paper and hard to refute, you have but to go into the street or the home, to wherever men strive and fail and suffer and love, and you will see how incongruous it is with all life as it is lived. It is literally one of the things that "every schoolboy knows," that he has power on his own account and is free to choose good or ill.

Miracles are the assurance to us from the other side that this doctrine of "scientific fatalism" is false. A miracle assures us that the world is not old, but new, and when appropriately wrought is a witness of the eternal freshness of God's Love. For a living God means in the last resort a loving God. For the most various and exhaustless of all spirits is Love. Not only does it heighten all activities and deepen every feeling, but it is ever fresh and resourceful, so that, as Keble wrote :

"New every morning is the Love
Our wakening and uprising prove."

I am told, that at this moment in the knowledge of natural things it is more and more the unique, the individual, that men speak of —and less the type, the specimen. Certainly this is true of all human life, as soon as we look at men and not at statistics. We have grown so much used to the phrases of the fatalist school that we have almost lost the power to look at the actual facts of life—inner and outer. Yet there is no day of which you can predict the issue and hardly an hour in which something quite unexpected does not happen. Thank God, the world is not dull, as it would be if we could calculate it all mathematically. It may be wicked, wearisome, overwhelming, but dull it never is. Life, with its ever changing colours and unpredictable events without, is terrible enough, but it is not dull; and within there is the undying romance of the individual soul. Life may be romance, tournament, tragedy—or sometimes comedy—but it is always greater than any formula; as Lotze was fond of saying "Reality is richer than thought." All schematic representations of life are unequal to the facts, just as religion is something deeper than any system of theology.

The cardinal objection to the Christian faith springs simply from the fact that Jesus shows us that God is alive. Driven by their passion for classification, men want to postulate God as a dead name, a formula for the world's development or a shorthand summary of the historical series. But Jesus Christ showed us God as a little child, God as despised, God as a dying criminal. It is that "weakness of God which is stronger than man" which men find so hard of belief. A God proud, far off, the King of Kings—that makes no difficult demand; but God near, God tender, God humble, the servant of servants, that is more than human nature can stand. "What need have we of any further witness, ye yourselves have heard the blasphemy." An Incarnate God involves His power to limit Himself almost inconceivably; the objections to this were felt long ago by Plato, and they remain at the root of much modern unbelief. The same is the case with the sacramental presence. People dislike this doctrine and scorn it. It frightens them. To bring God so close to our natural life, to challenge so violently man's faith in Him as living, seems to them a sacrilege. But, above

all, it is too humiliating. How can it be that the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth, He who orders the stars in their courses, could so belittle His splendour as to come to man veiled in a fragment of bread. How indeed? Why should He come at all? Why not reign aloft in unapproachable majesty, a sort of glorified Louis Quatorze? The fact is that the moment you begin to think of God as approaching to man, as allowing him in intimacy, you have in that sense belittled Him. The whole spirit of Christianity and its unique appeal lie precisely in this, that it reveals to us "the weakness of God," that strange elusive power of gentleness which Mr. Bernard Shaw set out in his *Blanco Posset*, that amazing strength which lies behind apparent helplessness and caused the sufferer on Calvary, with His throne of wood and iron and His spiked diadem, to "draw all men unto Him." For, remember, God must seem weak if man is ever to be free. It is a condition of man being a spirit, trained to holiness by choice, that the power which made him shall withdraw, shall limit itself, shall seem as nothing. Just as a wise parent or an elder brother or a

good teacher must limit his own expression, he must draw back, when he would like to warn: must allow the youth to blunder, he must often let him try roundabout or inefficient methods, in order to find out. But for some reason, founded, I think, in human pride, men will attribute to Omnipotence almost any power except that of limiting itself.

For this truth of God's renewing love is needful not only for the doctrine of God, but for that of man. If you surrender all faith in a power above and beyond Nature, as free and original and therefore prolific of the miraculous, the unique, you will in the long run be driven to deny man's freedom too and be left with a world mechanically acting, but with all its life evaporated. It is because experience speaks to us daily of the newness of life, of the real fire of choice, in a word, of our creative activity, that we are able to look on the world without as the product of a personal freedom, and to discern in it an evolution in the truest sense creative. Now we as Christians are bound to this notion, and all our faith stands or falls with it. We are bound to see God both above and within His works. His transcendence no

less than His immanence is a capital point of the creed.

So far from denying we assert the sacramental, that is the spiritual character, of all outward facts; we assert yet more emphatically the unique sacramental value of the life of Jesus Christ, of that Church which He set going, and of those means whereby His living gifts are dispensed. Compassed as we are by so great a cloud of witnesses, living not dead, it behoves us so to live as though we believed it true that the communion of saints is not the mere pictured image of historical characters, but the sharing in a present common life; and that in the Church as a whole St. Ambrose, St. Francis, St. Benedict, and St. Catharine are our contemporaries, living and able to help. It is not a very orthodox Christian who reminds us:

"The idea of angels is usually treated as fanciful. Imaginative it is, but not altogether fanciful, and though the physical appearance and attributes of such imaginary beings may have been over-emphasized or misconceived, yet facts known to me indicate that we are not really lonely in our struggles and that our destiny is not left to haphazard, that

there is no such thing as *laissez-faire* in a highly organised universe. Help may be rejected, but help is available; a ministry of benevolences surrounds us—a cloud of witnesses, not witnesses only but helpers, agents like ourselves of the Immanent God."

And yet how little use we make of this fact. Even those of us who hold it as a theory do little to make our theory a practical force. Think of the words of one who felt it bitterly:

"O world invisible we view thee!
O world intangible we touch thee!
O world unknowable we know thee!
Incomprehensible we clutch thee.

Does the fish soar to find the ocean?
The eagle plunge to find the air?
That we ask of the stars in motion
If they have rumour of thee there?

Not where the wheeling systems darken,
And our benumbed conceiving soars;
The drift of pinions, would we hearken,
Beats at our own clay-shuttered doors.

The angels keep their ancient places,
Turn but a stone and start a-wing;
'Tis ye, 'tis your estranged faces,
That miss the many-splendoured thing.

But when so sad thou canst not sadder,
Cry and upon thy so sore loss
Shall shine the traffic of Jacob's ladder,
Set between Heaven and Charing Cross.

Yea, in the night my soul, my daughter,
Cry clinging Heaven by the hems
And lo! Christ walking on the water
Not Gennesaret, but Thames."

The conclusion I wish to suggest is that if the world is at all losing its faith in a living God, it is largely the fault of us who retain it. Whatever we may say, we do not live as though God were the blazing part of our life. Even in our best moments and in our devotions, for one we give to Him, we give ten thoughts to ourselves. We will not give ourselves the trouble. We rush and hurry and go from this to that, whereas if we would but cultivate the spirit of quietness, we should be far more effective when we work. We are beginning to learn a little about the subliminal self, that great ocean of life out of which only self-conscious articulate life rises like an island. The habit of religion means the cultivation of this subconscious region. We need from time to

time to put away our activities, to detach ourselves, to set our minds at rest, drinking in that "peace of God" never credible to the world, precisely because it passes all understanding. Then indeed, if we did this, if we made this communion with Jesus the root fact of our lives, though we might still sin often enough and make bad blunders, the best of us not getting beyond the stage of troublesome children, yet still we should be living as sons of the house, heirs of the Kingdom of God. All its beauties and mysteries would be ours; and being ours they would come in some sort to those who have to do with us. They will take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus. Men will often despise us, more often dislike our profession, and call us hypocrites when they see our sins—as though we professed to be perfect. But they will see what we mean; that we have hold of something distinct from the world. We shall strike them much as the Christians struck the arrogant sceptical world of Rome. They will not doubt, that however imperfect in detail our lives are really God-centred.

Oh that you and I might echo those words of an early English hymn:

"God be in mine head,
And in mine understanding;
God be in mine eyes,
And in my looking;
God be in my mouth,
And in my speaking;
God be in my heart,
And in my thinking;
God be at mine end,
And at my departing."

# SELF-DEVELOPMENT[1]

"I have called thee by thy name."—ISAIAH lxv. 5.

RIGHTLY pursued, men's passion for distinction is natural, nor is it of itself wrong, but rather laudable. All men desire by virtue of their unique individuality that there shall be about them something peculiar, special, that attaches to them and to no one else. This feeling lies at the root of the desire for titles and minor distinctions. They are valued because of their assurance that society recognises to their possessor his own inalienable place. This is the good side of the aristocratic principle. It lies behind individualism, and in so far justifies it. The individual wants to be recognised, valued, felt. The grounds of this may be prowess in sport or adventure, or achievements intellectual and artistic, or success in administration, or social connection, or mere wealth. This last is the commonest form to-day, and the least worthy.

[1] Preached before the University of Yale.

But whatever shape it takes, there is no question but that throughout the world and in all ages there exists this desire for being picked, chosen. Crushed indeed may be the passion through adversity, and I suppose that among many of the submerged tenth this claim, like other social ambitions, has all but vanished under the one terrific pressure of hunger: and that is our fault. But in all normal human beings from the nursery to the schoolroom, from college *camaraderie*, through the struggles of middle life right down to old age, there is always to be found this same desire to be known for oneself, not it may be very widely, not perhaps for anything very important, but something that shall give one worth in the eye of those around us some recognition of our personal uniqueness.

The evil that attaches to all the forms of aristocratic distinction by which it is sought to satisfy this instinct, lies not in their existence, but in their limited nature. For instance, it is well that some should be marked out by birth or family tradition—if these things are facts and are interpreted according to the motto *noblesse oblige*. To deny this is

at bottom to make an attack on the institution of the family, and is unchristian. Wealth again in any society must serve inevitably as some mark of difference, owing to the power it must always carry and to the different way of life it brings about. Even this is not all evil or mere vulgarity, provided it leads, as it sometimes does, to a sense of the great responsibility and the real opportunities which it entails. Yet in both these cases there is, as we know full well, a danger that for the majority of those who have them, the main fruits will be those of arrogant contempt for all who do not own this distinction; and in many cases of self-indulgence. Such people tend in the slang of our day to say of all others that they "do not really exist." Perhaps you will go further, as many people do at least in theory, and say that you will make education and manners the real test. Yet this tends to a pride deeper than the other. Pride of birth or of wealth may in some respects be less reasonable, but it is not so deep nor so delusive as pride of culture. It is astonishing how many people give way to this latter form of exclusiveness, and yet are unaware of the fact, simply because they

have confused all snobbery with its older forms. Such people may be willing to place men on an equal footing, the son of a navvy and the son of a millionaire, provided each has certain natural gifts and has developed them by training. Outside that circle of the educated they are contemptuous alike of poor and rich, as lacking in culture. When this means disapproval of persons who have had the means to improve themselves and have not done so, it may be allowed; otherwise it is a snobbery no less deep than the more vulgar forms. Perhaps artistic snobbery goes deeper than intellectual, because it is conceivable that every one might be educated, while a high æsthetic taste is largely a gift. All snobbery is the same. It means the treating with contempt those who, through no fault of their own, are without whatever distinction is the true one in the mind of the person concerned. And so we may take one step further. There is a religious snobbery yet deeper still; that of the Pharisee who thanks God he is not as other men are because he is regular at the offices of his Church; that of the Calvinist who rejoices in his own "calling and election," mainly because he can

regard with complacent pity the millions outside the pale. Although the Calvinist system has decayed, this temper may be found to-day among religious people. Always there are those who believe that the *raison d'être* of God Almighty is to smile on their own *côterie*, or who value their own Protestant, or Catholic, party, chiefly as the medium by which they may despise those who do not embrace it.

All these things are evil. The evil comes from a very natural extension of that love of distinction, which I believe to be inherent in man, and the error lies in treating something adventitious, the gift of fortune or intellect or religious privilege—capital in fact—as the ground of distinction, instead of recognising that the true distinction of every man lies in himself and is independent alike of gifts and calling.

The Gospel of Christ—and that alone—ministers to this desire in its right sense. For that assures not to some but to all their unique value. It is because the Gospel assures to the individual as such, that he has eternal worth; that he means something, means it for ever, means it not to man only but to God, that it can allow those institutions which

minister to distinction, while relieving them from danger. Nowadays people complain of the clergy wearing a uniform; appearing as a separate class. That complaint has its source in a false notion. Instead of treating each calling in human life as having its own especial value and its own appropriate costume, now we have brought all down to one dead level, and the only difference is in the cost. Thus there is a greater and more galling difference between poor and rich in outward appearance than ever there was in days gone by, when every one from knight to apprentice, from lord to peasant, had his own especial uniform, and was proud with the pride of his company and loyal to his guild. So it is with the Christian Church. It teaches not that some individuals are favoured of God, some callings honourable, but that all are; that what God cares for is for the individual, the separate special thing in each man, which makes him a class by himself.

This truth of the individual, of the worth and even reality of each man is to-day assailed. Pantheism rejects it, and in some of its myriad forms that is the fashionable philo-

sophy. All those vague instincts which men collect under the term cosmic emotion set it at naught. A widespread disbelief in personal immortality is fatal to all real sense of individual worth, although this result may not appear at first. The Christian Church is more and more becoming the sole strength of those who believe in man, just as it is the home of all vital belief of God, as Love. Pantheism is at bottom opposed to both, and asserts nothing but a vague being. For it is God, as being able to be intimate with man, his Saviour and his friend, that can alone be an object of worship. It is man not as he can destroy his individuality to win deliverance, as Buddhism teaches, but as he can develop it in union with God and his fellows, that alone can present an object worth attaining. Christianity teaches that Love is the secret of all reality, of God no less than of man. And Love, though it means sacrifice, does not and cannot involve self-annihilation. Even of the most self-sacrificing men and women in history, St. Paul, St. Francis, St. Catherine, you could not say that their individuality was less than that of others. Rather it is more vital and compelling.

So I would warn you against the bias of those who preach to youth with its growing and struggling life, that which is in reality a doctrine of death. Self-sacrifice in the form which Buddhism or Pantheistic altruism may inculcate is not natural, and it is not Christian, although some mistake it for such. Nay, God gives us our individual being, and gives it for ever; not that we may destroy it, but may offer it in praise to Him. So far indeed they are right who preach to-day the doctrine of life, of self-development, of "yea-saying." The cry for a more abundant life, for richer and fuller being is founded on the deepest truth in our nature; and Christ Himself declared "I am come that they might have life and might have it more abundantly."

But what does this mean, the more abundant life? "More money"? I trow not. Here at least I need not waste your time in showing that beyond a certain point material wealth is rather a hindrance than a help to a full life. Up to a certain point it is a help; there is no need to deny that. No sadder spectacle is to be seen than that of the millions whom the modern gold-idol crushes beneath its jug-

gernaut car with never a chance to develop, barely a sign of true freedom, and three-quarters of the avenues to life closed. True it is, that a man can serve God how meagre soever his life be. Yet it is only the hypocrisy of the comfortable classes which makes those who are rich declare that earthly goods do not matter; or that there is nothing wrong with a society which keeps millions only just above the starvation limit. But apart from this, for those placed as you are, the truth is on the other side, that "man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things that he possesseth."

I pass from that obvious maxim. The same is true of mere knowledge. Intellectual inquiry and the activity of thought are indeed no ignoble aims. To win these fruits a man must "scorn delights, and live laborious days," and sacrifice much that to most men seems desirable. But knowledge itself cannot satisfy. It is but a Dead Sea fruit. The man who develops that side of him alone and starves the bodily or the emotional or the spiritual side of his being is no less a monstrosity than one to whom the things of the mind mean nothing at all.

Culture again (so far as you can separate it

from knowledge) affords to some men the promise of more enduring worth. For culture is not purely intellectual, but seeks to set the whole life in harmony. "Perfection" was what a great teacher of the last generation called it and tended to identify it with true salvation. As another exponent says: "The service of philosophy, of speculative culture, to the human spirit, is to rouse, to startle it with a sharp and eager observation. Every moment some form grows perfect in hand or face; some tone on the hills or the sea is choicer than the rest; some mood of passion or insight or intellectual excitement is irresistibly real and attractive for us—for that moment only. Not the fruit of experience—but experience itself is the end. A counted number of pulses is given to us of a variegated dramatic life. How may we see in them all that is to be seen by the finest senses? How shall we pass most swiftly from point to point, and be present always at the focus where the greatest number of vital forces unites in that purest energy?

"To burn alway with this hard, gem-like flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is success in life.

Of this wisdom the poetic passion, the desire of beauty, the love of art for art's sake has most, for art comes to you professing frankly to give nothing but the highest quality to your movements as they pass, and simply for these moments' sake."

It is a voluptuary's philosophy: but apart from that, where is to be the end? If the moment be nothing but itself, if there be no life beyond, "no bliss to die with dim descried," ere long there come weariness and gloom. We cannot go forward, even piling up the delights of the spirit, if all be but shadows soon to pass.

Nor is this all. No man liveth to himself alone. In isolation none can develop even his capacities for pleasure. When we talk of individual personality, we must not lose sight of the fact that individual personality is itself a social thing. We can only come to ourselves through contact with others. The family, the school, the College, the profession, the nation, are all of them social unions, whose life is real and enters into us and helps to make us what we are. One developed entirely alone would not be human. He could not even make himself understood. People talk

sometimes of self-made men, as though such a thing were not a contradiction. The "self-made man," so called, could have made very little but for the law and the whole social organisation, which has made his career possible.

And so we find, that if life as personal is to fulfil itself, it cannot be mere self-development, but it must have to boot a social reference. Man is a spirit, created to love. His nature cannot reach its end, or acquire its highest delicacy of spirit without the sorrow and delight that come of love. All the most gracious qualities of human life, all the highest gifts alike of achievement and aspiration, that which makes character not merely strong, but beautiful; all these things do, as a fact, come only to the man or woman who loves greatly, who shrinks not from the sacrifice—and in the true sense gives himself away. "If a man will save his life he shall lose it; if he will lose his life, for My sake, he shall save it." A friend of mine, learned, fortunate, and bored, once said to me, that he no longer found anything worth doing, for he wanted a great emotion. Happy he who has not so starved his gifts of loving

that, except by a miracle, emotions are no longer possible.

So it is with each one of us. We can never do our best, our more than utmost, save under the stress of a mighty attraction and some great love that drags the soul like a magnet and tears out of us more than we knew we possessed. For that is the point. Love is creative. It makes more of us than we could have thought. It outruns calculation. How many a man, how many a boy, under the influence of some hero-worship, will dare more and endure more than he could have dreamed of without. But Love has lifted him; he thinks no more of himself but of the object, and can pass through things he could not before have faced.

This is true of human love. Truer it is still of the love of God. That alone can absorb the whole being. Limits there are in all worthy love, however passionate; flaws in the crystal of the least imperfect characters. If man be a loving being, and his nature no accident, he needs for his devotion an object which endures and is comprehensive. Finally he can rest in no Love save that of the altogether Lovely. He must fly "the alone to

the Alone," that there in the bosom of the Eternal he may be satisfied at last. For Love by its very nature must seek perfection. Hence the mythical blindness of the god, for he of design ignores those faults which he secretly discerns. All earthly love thus points to the heavenly as the pattern, just as all earthly beauty is the symbol and sacrament of that "laid up in the heavens." For man must seek by the law of his being, not only to love, but to be loved. Nowhere can his search be at rest, save in God. His wandering, seeking spirit must win the friendship of the Eternal on pain of being in the world forever homeless. This strange leaping, struggling being, outwardly confident, and so proud, at heart timid as a child, this great-little medley of hopes and fears, of failures and delights, cannot endure to be alone, and demands one whose thought and care shall never leave him. Like a child at night asking to be tucked in and kissed, man asks of the universe a home, and of Eternity a Father.

For us Christians, that Father speaks. He speaks in His dear Son, Our Lord Jesus, and shows us what God is—Love. In Him that

brightness of glory was but the smile made certain of God's Love. For Christ alone among man's teachers has told them of the humble tenderness that lies at the root of things.

That, my brothers, is the final joy. Not our love it is, but the love of one higher, that raises man. What makes us fit for more than we dreamed, is the smiling burst in the eyes of one whom we admire. What will do great things with us, is, not our love for Christ, but His love for us. "Ye have not chosen Me," he said, "but I have chosen you." We love Him, because He first loved us. It is not what we do that will save us, but what God does.

He wants us. Oh! strange and wonderful thought. God wants us. "I have called thee by thy name." "I have formed thee; thou art My servant." "I girded thee though thou hast not known Me." You with your pride and weakness, you with your ignorance and petty thoughts, you with all your sins; it is you, just you that God wants. He wants you to serve Him here. He wants you, in your College life, in its studies, in its sports, in its friendship and in all its wonderful dreams—

the long, long thoughts of youth. He looks for great things of you, things that you do not know of, things that you cannot do. Some one said, "a highway robber asks your money or your life; but Christ asks both." May God grant that you give both.

# MEMBERS ONE OF ANOTHER[1]

"Members one of another."—EPH. iv. 25.

MR. H. G. Wells in his latest novel declares that there are but two types of man, the aristocrat and the man who takes his cue from others. He himself decides for the former, the proud and self-reliant type, determined to take nothing for granted and achieving good for other men by superior strength. As a fact, these two types or tendencies jostle one another in each one of us. There is the instinct for distinction, for separateness, which is bound up with our individuality, and there is the instinct of solidarity, of oneness with the race, which is the foundation of all authority. Both these instincts the Gospel satisfies. It assures us of our separateness, our individual worth; it tells each man that he means something to God; thus Christianity is in a true sense aristocratic. But it is, if I may so put it, democratically aristocratic. For this worth is assured to the individual because

[1] Preached at Princeton Episcopal Church.

he is a man, not because he belongs to this or that class, or has some distinctive gift. Having stated this individualist side of the Christian life, I shall not to-day linger upon it. This morning it is the social, communal aspect which I ask you to consider.

Man is not merely an individual; he is part of an order. He develops not by himself but in unison with others. Even for his life on earth his nature demands not only newness, adventure, singularity, but also oneness with the life of his fellows, sympathy for the past. Man in a word is at once a free spirit and the heir of all the ages. As such he must bring himself into touch with the great life that is ever proceeding. Nor could even his single individuality develop save in a society. Personality is a social fact.

Let us briefly consider this communal aspect of our life, and see how it is satisfied in the Christian Church.

First of all, this fact involves authority. The ultimate basis of all authority, whether religious or political, and even educational or æsthetic, is the fact that no man is complete in himself; that man is a social being. That

instinct which dislikes authority rejects tradition and rule, because it comes in a guise external and coercive, hampering the free life of impulse, limiting and narrowing the individual choice. Yet we must be limited if we are to be anything at all. As I said, not only can no man live without regard to his fellows; he cannot even become truly human without their life entering into his, making an element of his personality, in a union far more subtle and penetrating than can be gathered from any similes derived from contract. Societies can continue to exist only by mutual forbearance and the observance of rules, which at least sometimes must be unpleasant, for otherwise it would not be needful to make them. The man who would throw off all authority as a burdensome yoke, would in the last resort destroy the vestiges of peace and order. Yet how much do we hear of this now. Thoughtless gibes at the simplest social conventions, like the rule of the road or doffing one's hat or other courtesies. Shallow people will plume themselves on being above conventions, and say they do what they please. Yet things in a world of space and time must be

done somehow. In many matters waste is only to be avoided by having a rule. To go against the normal method is merely to introduce a fresh convention. Instances are many. Quakerism began by repudiating all conventions, and ended by establishing manners of speech and dress far more artificial than those which it displaced. For a large part of life, we must perforce be content with no other than a social reason; such and such things are "not done," as we say in our slang, or as St. Paul put it with his shrewd sense, "If a man seemeth to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither have the Churches of God." Those who try to break free of all codes because they are irksome—and at times they are—will either reduce themselves to a worse slavery or will find intercourse with their fellows impossible. The cant of conventionality is a shallow philosophy; but I am not certain but that a shallower one is the cant of unconventionality.

These words lead me to another point. Authority, which to its critics seems so hard and external, is not so in reality, or at least only in rare instances. In nine cases out of ten

authority, social, political, or religious, affords a refuge; it is a home rather than a prison, a crutch far more than a whip. The traditions of school life, the customs of subordination, even the definite power given to seniors, from outside may seem forbiding. But those who have lived through them almost invariably deny this. They teach humility and obedience —no small a part of education; they inculcate devotion to the common weal, they form the due balance between self-assertion and mere oppression; by providing a kindly common existence, a social atmosphere, they make for happiness. The spoiled child, the boy privately educated with no communal life in the subordination of school, the self-centred and irascible man, these people are not merely disagreeable to others and consequently often failing in life; but even in themselves they are less happy than one who as a child has been trained in the discipline of a family, has learned the harder give and take of school life, and has come to think of himself not merely as an isolated unit, but as, above all things, a member of a society. Nowadays many people are averse to discipline even in youth; but

there was wisdom in the words of the Greek dramatist:

ὁ μὴ δαρεὶς ἄνθρωπος οὐ παιδεύεται

or, as we might paraphrase it in modern language—the boy, who is never kicked, will grow into a cub. Here then, in that simple necessary part of education, the communal side of life comes in. It is necessary, because education in some form is due to the fact that we are not born grown up; and in every kind of society it has taken the form of a life of fellowship, of *camaraderie*. The isolation of a child of rich persons is a very rare phenomenon, only possible in a complex organisation. Now the Christian Church is above all things a life of fellowship. No error was ever greater than that which thinks of Christianity as a purely individual affair, and rules out the great society by membership in which we become Christians; or else treats it as an after-thought. Search the New Testament through, and you can find nothing about becoming a Christian by yourself, and apart from the society of fellow-Christians. Always it is of the Church, the body of believers, that we hear; by joining that

society, and so only, is the converted soul made a member of Christ. In politics to-day the hard individualism of the Manchester school has vanished, the atomic theories of the State are giving way to the communal. Mere contractualism is all but forgotten. It is amazing, with social notions more and more dominant in politics (however different the forms they take), that many people turn their backs on all this the moment they begin to talk of religion, and speak as though it were a purely individual matter, membership in this or that Church being no more incumbent on a Christian than a share in a literary club and carrying less obligation. People expect to go to Church when they please, to worship as they please, and transfer their allegiance from one body to another with as little notion of any obligation as if they were changing their dentist. Rules, too, of any kind are resented. More and more is the cry heard that any attempt to declare that Christianity means something and therefore excludes something else is interference with the right of investigation. And any attempt to enforce a particular system of rules or to pronounce certain modes of life as definitely unchristian

is treated as narrowing and sectarian. But sectarianism in this sense must belong to Christianity; it has attached to it from the first. In any society like our own, where all creeds are tolerated, those who make the Christian faith the norm of their life's ideal must inevitably be separated from those who do not, and so far a sect. The meaning of Church worship is surely this, that a faith in the claims of Christ however reached when it is reached becomes authoritative. Free, indeed, men must be to accept Christ as Lord or to reject Him; but when they have accepted His lordship they cannot be their own masters; and the society or fellowship of believers claims this loyalty.

But this is not all. Man needs not merely the sense of fellowship with those on earth, but that of kinship with those gone before. The social bonds of men stretch beyond the little hour of his earthly life: they direct our thoughts to the future and have their roots deep in the past. Man is the "heir of all the ages." Much of his education consists in fitting him for that society. That conscious fitness is the one dividing line between the educated man and the barbarian. The culti-

vation of our faculties is to introduce us by training, by imagination and sympathy, by the thousand subtle influences of home and school and college, by reading and hearing and amusement and sight into fellowship not only with the men of our own time, but with those of all ages. The educated man is one who has fought battles with Homer and heard dialectics argued in Plato's dialogues, and been transfigured by the vision of Dante, and learnt of human love and sorrow from Shakespeare. The splendour and the shame of the Renaissance, the wonder of Fra Angelico, the inner life of a St. Augustine, a Pascal, or a Newman have all entered into his being; they make a part of him, and in some ways he may become more intimate with Montaigne or Lamb than with any passing acquaintance. The power to profit by education—apart from its mere utilitarian aspects—consists largely in this introduction to a wider society. Take any of the best educated men you have known, and is not this the impression which they made, that their speech, their look, their phrases, their little prejudices and all their interests reflect a wider horizon than anything immediate: they are a synthesis of the

social influence of many ages, fused into one by the alembic of personality.

Only with some such knowledge can we take sure steps towards the future. We must possess the past without being enslaved by it. If we would rightly direct our destinies at this present hour, we must have some notion as to all the forces which have brought us where we are. More and more is it borne in upon us, in regard to all problems political or sociological, that without reference to the past they cannot even be grasped. No more disastrous blunders are made than those of benevolent men, confident in their good purpose, who seek to reform mankind or the State without any knowledge of similar problems in the past or any attempt to take to heart the teaching of the world's experience.

So with the claim of the Church; that claim involves authority, because it is communal and historic. Piety, to be a worthy and noble motive, needs not merely the enthusiasm of the moment. That is needful, but unless it be united with regard to the great past of man's spiritual life, such enthusiasm will become too emotional and subjective, and will be liable to suffer at once from eccentricity and conceit.

Men need to be saved from the defects even of their good qualities. Religion is a quality too enduring and unitive in human life ever to be left to the caprice of any individual, however devoted. The lines which separate what is wholesome from what is dangerous, what is permanently valuable from what is momentarily pleasing, the danger even of appalling sins from what seem innocent and to the individual edifying, the limits of reverence are so subtle and the value of experience in worship so deep, that we shall infallibly become "pert and provincial" almost by virtue of our piety unless we set ourselves at one with that main stream of religious experience that has moulded the life of the race. Ludicrous indeed were it, if it were not so pitiable, to see how sincere Christians will yet put up and even practise all kinds of crudities, not because they like them, but simply because they have learnt nothing of that great prayer-life of the human-divine society in which the efforts of countless men and women of divers ages and alien intellectual climates have been moulded together, checked and balanced and mellowed by the long result of time and the

ever-changeful life of the Christian community.

To worship in the Catholic Church is to have your part in the great spiritual home of the race. There is the centre of the religious experience of humanity, and if you do not wish your life to be maimed or narrowed, you will seek to bear your part in that society. Religion may indeed be, as some think, a bad thing, or as others would say, not evil in itself but of a passing value now gone by. But if this be not so, if religion answer to the deepest needs of human life, if it be the deepest and most creative and most satisfying of all interests, then it would seem to me a strange caprice which would seek its expression in some little body confined to persons of one kind of temperament and one epoch of culture, and put aside as of no account the great society which embraces all temperaments and breathes the spirit of a hundred generations. This does not exclude, nay it develops, our individual affinities and special devotions. But it develops them within the one great society—the home of the soul.

Every age has its own task. Part of that task is always to correct the exaggerations of

its immediate predecessor. For all that, the inheritance of humanity is not the work of any single age; it is the long result of time, that great sculptor which softens hard outlines and invests with an appealing beauty the monuments of man's spirit. The thoughts and the instincts, the conflicts and the hopes, the sorrow and the love, and the joy and the splendour of all our fellows who have gone before do not die; they live on in the worship and the buildings and the phrases and the gestures and all the ordered and subtle harmony of a communal religion, which surrounds us as an atmosphere and makes our home.

The home of the soul,—there is the meaning of the Church in human life. Here is gathered all that is most abiding in character, the beauty of holiness, the strength of self-mastery, the agelong tenderness of humanity, the pity and the piety of little things, and the gracious remembrance of the saints. We do not make enough of our heritage as Churchmen. Too often we patronise the Church, instead of feeling honoured by our membership. Her public prayers, her round of fast and festival, her ordered activity and the

sacraments of grace, surely these things ought to be to us a privilege and a wonder, instead of being used "grudgingly and of necessity." Let us think more of the Christian family and less of ourselves; more of her claim, less of our right; let us then have more gratitude for the strange Providence which has "called us to be saints." Truly "the lot has fallen unto us in pleasant places; and we have a goodly heritage." And we may say, as I was wont to hear as a boy weekly at family prayers, the great words of the Psalmist: "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. Jerusalem is built as a city that is at unity in itself. Oh pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls and plenteousness within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' sake I will wish thee prosperity. Yea, because of the love of the Lord our God I will seek to do thee good."

# THE RELIGIOUS LIFE[1]

ἡμῶν δε τὸ πολίτευμα ἐν τοις οὐρανοῖς.

—PHILIPPIANS iii. 20.

Is not this the lesson which this house and order exists to set forth. Here at the very heart of the national life, with the world and all its urgent clatter booming round, England in the pomp of arrogant achievement is bidden to remember how riches and splendour and the luxurious elaboration of life are nothing and less than nothing and vanity. This quiet house with its simple frontage and small membership of poor men, is it not a little akin to those few who sat in the upper room and waited? That Pentecost for which they watched indeed came and in its uncalculated path it was to sweep away all the outward semblance of Jewish nationality, though preserving its spirit, and later on to subdue that proud Empire, which was its conqueror.

[1] Preached before the Society of St. John the Evangelist at the festival of St. Edward's House, Westminster.

And we the few, poor "religious," in a world that has "got beyond monasticism," have a like office. We are to preach to men rather by life than word that our citizenship is in Heaven; that there the things that matter, "the true joys," are to be found, and that they, on the other hand, with everything to flatter and support and all the probabilities on their side, are making a capital error. Pleasant indeed for the nonce, alluring and beyond words preponderant, appear to men's eager gaze "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." Yet it is but appearance, and the soul which seeks therewith to feed itself is starved, as at some Barmecide feast. Too late, alas! it learns the things that belong unto its peace; "for the world passeth away and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." This house is dedicated to St. Edward, that strange half-Norman English king, the last of his line, honoured in days gone as a saint, but now despised as a weakling. Perhaps he was. Yet he had one quality, which we at least can reverence. His affections were set on things above, nor did he ever doubt which side of things mattered. Now men do

doubt it. Or if they do not it is because for most men the doubt has been resolved—and resolved in the wrong way. This world and its interests and they alone seem to men real, and the call of the beyond sounds faint and ghostly. Even among our best priests there is the danger lest religion sink down mainly into a thing of this world, making men better here, and using the thought of the other only as a means to that end. Natural indeed is the mistake. Yet it is a mistake. If it be true that man is a being created to be immortal then those must be right who treat this life as an episode, a brief journey to something better, and bid us "pass the time of our sojourning here in fear." Now that truth more than any other is what we "religious" exist to teach. As such, the religious is not a priest nor a Church-worker, although he commonly is one or the other. But you here have your distinction, not as you are devoted priests or efficient workers, but as you are persons whose interest is on the other side, for whom this life is deeply prized because if rightly viewed it leads us on. I do not know that by his vocation the religious is especially fitted to give ghostly counsel, or to deal with

the problems of practical life, or administrative work. Maybe there is truth in the common charge that his very detachment makes it harder for him to understand the conditions of the average man or woman; that even in ecclesiastical politics or theology he is apt to be too rigidly theoretical. I do not say that this is so; but perhaps it is. However that may be, the value to London of a house like this in no way lies in its possessing efficiency in any of those ways. However devoted the members of your society, no one could claim but that many obscure priests in slums and dull suburbs or hidden parishes are not equally selfless, no less full of love to God or care for His children. High as may be your ideals, none would deny that you could find a higher among many a Christian layman. But what makes the difference—I don't say it is a better thing but it is something different—is this. This house exists of set purpose for the things of God, only afterwards for any other end. We are to be, like the boy Jesus in the Temple, "about our Father's business," aloof from the concerns of this life.

I repeat what I began with. All turns on

a difference of interests. Our lives ought to be theocentric. That is our work. The business of most men is to devote themselves to their calling always as in God's sight, using religion as a help to that end. The greater part of the office of the Church is to aid them in this; by showing them the strength of prayer and sacraments and finding ever a deeper meaning in the commandment to love one another. With the religious life, on the other hand, these ends sink into the second place. Its *raison d'être* is the few—always a few—who in any age are called to leave these things aside, to try to treat men, and get them to treat themselves, as they will be at that hour when the lights of this life burn low. With this aim they are to live in detachment from those objects and problems which rightly fill so large a place in the life of Christian men and women and even Christian priests, living in the world. Let me illustrate this: One main duty of the ordinary Christian is a noble wedded life, and to bring up his children in the faith and fear of God. A corresponding duty in the parish priest is to help this object by showing what the duties are and giving teaching and comfort. Of the

religious in this regard *qua* religious, the duty is surely quite different. He stands for the other complementary truth, that all these things are only means, that "it behoveth they that have wives to be as though they had none; and they that weep as though they wept not; and they that rejoice as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy as though they possessed not; for the fashion of this world passeth away." For this reason, this lesson of other-worldly interests brings in its train other truths to which this house of yours bears daily witness, the truths of rest and of joy. To this fevered London world, living on excitement, torn with ambition, striving and never attaining, in its passion of life neglecting the means to live, pressing from one pleasure to the next, from business to politics, from politics to sport, from sport to social distraction, with no pause, no space, no margins, to this world you come with an ordered day, fixed for no utilitarian or monetary purpose, merely to worship God, and having space for prayer within the intervals to do such tasks as may be. Such a life speaks more acutely than any sermon of the peace which Christ left with His Church, that

gift which those who know it say "passes all understanding," which ever since its first bestowal has calmed the storms of human strife, and said "Be still" to the waves of self-love.

And with this peace is also joy. The life of all religious, hard in some ways, has got a great joy at its centre, the joy of a love which has not shrunk from sacrifice, and so has come to know itself. Sometimes to you the Beloved comes down into his garden to gather lilies of long thought; or at times in prayer or Eucharistic praise, and most of all in quiet "without noise of words," he speaks and you are caught up in a mystery, hearing "unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter."

Thus by this calm, which comes of a life at rest in its true centre, by the joy, the meed of sacrifice, by the aloofness which comes from a sense of the shortness of the time, by all these things you preach to a wearied city what no one else can preach so fitly.

I wonder what St. Edward thinks, as he looks at the great pile a little way off and reads its history and sees its movements, all the consequence of his act. As he looks on one side of the famous Abbey and prays for

England; and then on the other at this house and this small chapel, attracting little notice and unrenowned, which does he find most like his dream, when first that Abbey was projected? In which lies that conformity to spiritual ideals which is so much deeper than any continuity of endowments or outward rules?

I do not know. But this is certain. This place wherein we now are celebrating the Holy Mysteries, is a witness to the reality of these other-worldly interests, at which men scoff. It witnesses to the sense of being at home, which springs from God's call in love and man's response. The notes of the bustling world are a squalid pettiness, splendid in outward accoutrement, and an activity, empty of enduring achievement. Amid all this tinsel and vanity, we may be glad to bear our part in fixing men's thoughts on the land that is very far off, dreaming—as they say—of the "beauty of God."

# A BETTER COUNTRY[1]

"Here we have no continuing city."—HEB. xiii. 14.

THE battle-cries of contending parties are ringing in our ears. Deafened by the clamour and sensible of the air of crisis we feel or should feel a burden greater than normal in the duty of giving our vote. On either side men are telling us that nothing less is at stake than national existence, the character of the race, the level of our whole life, personal and communal; that for better or worse the balance of the constitution is being changed—and so forth. What are we to think of such things? I am not here to tell you my views on these complex issues; to bid you, as Christians, to vote one way or the other. But I am here to say that it is your Christian duty to see that your vote is determined neither by passion nor interest, that you are not, on the one hand, being moved

[1] Preached in St. Mary's Cathedral, Edinburgh, during the General Election, 1911.

by covetous pride or, on the other, by "envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness." These thoughts are pertinent at such times. The office of the Christian priest lies much in reminding people that a vote is not a right but a trust, that failure to cast it in accordance with the highest motives is a sin. It is no sin to be either Liberal or Tory or Socialist; but it is a grave sin to be any one of these *for a motive unworthy* of a Christian, whether that motive be greed or pride or envy or any other form of self-seeking. Yet after all there is a more important duty still of the Christian priest in times of political excitement. It is well to point out the moral and even religious obligation of earthly citizenship. It is well to bid people be patriotic and disinterested and benevolent. It is well to tell them that "righteousness exalteth a nation" and that "oppression driveth a wise man mad." But it is better to tell them that all these matters of politics and social crises are chiefly important for the way in which they bring out men's character; that a political Utopia if we could reach it is but a shadow and a symbol of that beyond; that the earthly paradise is indeed but a

sorry exchange for those heavenly places for which we look.

Picture to yourselves for a moment how you would feel supposing *per impossible* the Utopia of your dreams could be realised. Would you be satisfied? Supposing there comes the promised time when war shall be no more; and lust, oppression, crime have vanished into limbo, would that be enough? On this matter we have on record the opinion of one great man possessed with a burning love of justice and desire for social improvement—John Stuart Mill. In a moving passage of his Autobiography he describes the emptiness of soul which came over him as he contemplated in dream the world arranged at last on lines of justice (as he conceived it) with no more social wrongs crying for redress—and yet it was all "vanity of vanities," and for some months he lived in a deadness of spirit, as he thought how little worth while the whole effort is.

That seems to me to be true of all of us. The human desire is boundless in range and no earthly hope may satisfy it. You may do much, very much, by improved laws and better administration, but what does it all

come to, if we may not look to a life beyond? "What the law could not do, the bringing in of a better hope did." "Thou hast made us for Thyself," said St. Augustine, "and our heart is restless till it find Thee!" "They that speak thus declare plainly that they seek a better country, that is a heavenly." Supposing this life be all, is it really worth while securing a little more happiness or even justice for the toiling multitudes of men? You only give them more leisure to brood over the inevitable close, where there is "no work nor device nor knowledge." It is not the happiness but the character of men that is the true aim of all social improvement. And the development of character is the vainest of all vain achievements, if we are but the bubbles on the stream of time, and the whole life of the race an "episode in the life of one of the meanest of the planets." In the last resort it is found that the heavenly hope alone lends reality to all schemes of earthly amelioration, the life beyond that alone gives value to this, the eternal, the immortal, the invisible that alone make it worth while to lift mankind from the mire of selfishness and corruption. If indeed we are immortal

spirits, it is no reason for slackness here and now, but rather for an abounding energy. As we are told in the Second Epistle of Peter: "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting on to the coming of the day of God."

That is the real motive to action, the true unity of human life amid its chaotic purposes. "We seek a better country, that is a heavenly," and the better and more perfect we make the earthly, the deeper goes the inexhaustible hope for something that shall know no dying.

This hope has been a main theme of Christian devotion in all ages. In nearly every generation past some hymn has been written on the topic. Men used to love to talk about this life as a pilgrimage and of the blessed home beyond. Whether you take the great library of Christian devotion, or the New Testament or the most popular hymns, it is amazing what a large proportion is filled with this *nostalgia of the infinite*, this home sickness of a spirit, which no earthly rest can alleviate. We may or may not echo them

in our own experience, but there they are in all ages and ever popular. Just think of their names; you will see how well known they are:

"Jerusalem on high,
My song and city is."

"Jerusalem the golden."

"Jerusalem, my happy home,
Name ever dear to me;
When shall my labours have an end,
Thy joys when shall I see?"

"Oh what the joy and the glory must be,
These endless Sabbaths the blessed ones see."

"I'm but a stranger here,
Heaven is my home."

Assuredly there must be some deep-seated instinct of human nature which words like these express, or we should not have so many of them, and that too from such very different ages.

At times they seem unreal: and I suppose that it is unnatural to put them into the mouths of the young. Still as a whole they are popular, and have been popular in many different intellectual climates. This points

to the ineradicable desire of the human heart for the vision of God; and to the futility of all those notions of religion which relate it mainly to this world.

As Father Tyrrell said, religion is in its nature concerned with the other world. Unless we believed in some power, *jenseits*, with whom we can have communion, we might have a moral code but no religion. Do not mistake me. I am not intending to undervalue the need of right action here and now; or the duties of earthly citizenship, of family affection, and daily work. Only I say that the motive of Christians in doing them is different from that of men who do not look for "that blessed hope." The springs of our life are in the world beyond. It is because God "made man to be immortal and made him an image of His own eternity," because his life here is but an episode, though a critical episode, in a career of wider range, that human actions are worth while, and human character repays the infinite pains of its development. Otherwise *le jeu ne vaut pas la chandelle.*

The leading thought of the Christian is not, how shall I do my duty to my fellow-

men and make them happier, but how best can I fit myself and others for that society of God and His angels which is the "end of every man's desire." For that is it. "What is the chief end of man? The chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever." That is the thought that ought to be with us far more than it is nowadays. I think that all those who have to do with the sick and dying will allow that this plays a more important part in their life than the modern world is apt to allow.

As a practical conclusion, let me urge the need of spending more time and thought on these topics than is now common. The old custom of Sunday reading had more to be said for it than we are prone to admit. The Christian needs always to be a little detached even from his best work. His office is not to do this or that, but to please God, and the end of it all lies beyond.

In this regard, I would urge above all that we should make more use of that great service instituted by our Lord Himself. As we make use of the Eucharist, not for our own selfish benefit, not merely to receive something, but

just to be quiet in God's presence, we shall be better prepared to go about the tasks of this life as looking to another, and more able to throw off the cares and deceitfulness of riches.

# THE TRUE FAST[1]

"Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou seest the naked that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?"—ISAIAH lviii. 6–7.

PIOUS people are the object of the prophet's address in these words from to-day's first lesson. He is not thinking of the irreligious or disreputable, but rather of those who are fond of the worship of God. To folk like this, strict in attending to religious duties and severe to all breakers of the seventh commandment, the prophet directs his searchlight of inquiry. It is well to talk of fasting, to practise small self-denials, or to enjoy services. But what is your life as a whole? Are you just to your servants, or do you exact all your labours, in other words sweat them to the uttermost? Have you any care as to whence or how your

[1] Preached in Holy Trinity Church, Boar Lane, Leeds, on Ash Wednesday, 1912.

income is obtained? Or do you as the foundation of your ease make use of cruelty and fraud? Perhaps indeed you do not yourselves make use of them directly, but do you by careless neglect allow to the oppressors a free hand? For only as you refuse to profit by wrong and set yourself against it, can you have any true or enduring joy from your religion. "Then (and only then) shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness be free; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rereward. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and He shalt say 'Here I am.' If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity; and if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul, then shall thy light rise in obscurity and thy darkness be as the noonday; and the Lord shall guide thee continually and satisfy thy soul in drought and make fat thy bones; and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not. And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places; thou shalt raise up the foundations of many

generations; and thou shalt be called, the repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in."

No more touching or beautiful gift of blessings is to be found in Holy Writ. Both the blessings and the conditions without which they cannot be had are of concern to us now. I wish that the respectable Churchmen and Churchwomen of our day would give a little more thought to these Hebrew prophets; or if they think them old fashioned, at least they might have regard to the Epistle of St. James, and to the flaming words of Christ. They would find in them more than they know. Nor indeed could such things go on being read in the course of the Church's year, were it not that men have grown dull to their meaning, The burden of the prophets is twofold. Each aspect is needed to-day. Firstly there always comes the spiritual nature of reality—and the transcendence of God. Never was that truth more needed than at this moment, when on all sides we see attempts proceeding to confine our outlook to this world, and to hold a view of God's immanence which denies to Him all personal activity. Of this, however, I do not

this morning desire to speak. The second quality of the prophets is no less salient. It is their emphasis on social justice. The words of my text do but repeat what may be found in a hundred forms in the Old Testament, that religiosity, the mere enjoyment of pious emotion, is of no ultimate avail either to the nation or the individual who neglects works of mercy, and prospers on oppression.

We Church people at this present moment have great need to rethink these thoughts. Ash Wednesday ushers in the season of penitence and inquiry. To some extent we withdraw from the world. We curtail our amusements. We practise some form (not too severe) of self-discipline. As each year goes by, we hope that Lent is going to be more fruitful than it has been. Too often, however, we feel that this is not the case. Lent comes and goes; and leaves us much as it found us. Indeed, as time goes on, each season of penitence seems to have a diminishing effect upon us, and our lives grow more drab and self-satisfied. Many causes help to this end. But may not one of them be this—that we do not go deep enough in our self-

inquiry? Of certain besetting sins we are aware. Possibly we know or think that we know a good deal about our individual characters. But do we go far enough, or reflect, whether perhaps these things are only on the surface of our lives, and what is really wrong is not something of a different kind?

So also with the Church at large. Corporately we are free to confess ourselves "miserable sinners." We are pleased to sing that

> "By many deeds of shame
> We know that love grows cold."

We deplore the lack of self-denial or the inadequacy of alms-giving.

Ordination statistics are not what they should be. We talk of the need of Church defence, of the widespread decay of belief, of the collapse of the church-going habit, the desecration of Sunday, the increasing scarcity of teachers, and so forth. We cannot understand how it is that so many people dislike and so many others ignore the Church. Perhaps we forget that partly this is our heritage; it is what we are here for; as Christians we are intended not to be liked by the world.

The contempt of unbelievers ought to be our crown, and no shame to us.

But this is not all. Some of the hostility we encounter, is due not to our being Christians, but to our being bad Christians. If, and in so far as the Church is ceasing to be the conscience of the nation, may it not be partly because she has held herself aloof from topics of national importance? In so far as the great mass of working men disregard the Church (and I am afraid that they do) may not the cause be that the Church has herself largely withdrawn from the masses; or at best that she has stood over against them as something foreign, a mere "Lady Bountiful." On the other hand, there is apparent the alienation not of the poor but of the rich from Christianity. We wonder that so few in our richest families, even though calling themselves Christian, have realised the call to real sacrifice; or that the supply of ordinands among those who had the most advantages grows small; or that among the comfortable classes many give up the practice of religion at once on leaving school. But perhaps they see what we do not. These people may understand that any real Christi-

anity is not congruous with their life, and since religion is not compatible with mere money-getting or with self-indulgence, now that they can do as they please they abandon a practice which was to them at no time more than a convention, and remain outside the Church. And this is increasing. In spite of ourselves we are being forced into greater reality and intensity of Church life. The action of the most outwardly fortunate in an age of liberty is more and more depriving the Church of that tendency to confuse herself with the world which is otherwise so strong and in different forms has been proceeding for nineteen hundred years. Still, the notion is very prevalent even now. In the minds of vast masses of the population, the thought is dominant, that the Church of England is an upper-middle class institution, worked for the advantage of the clergy and their families, dispensing gifts to the poor, but sharing the prejudices and general outlook of the dividend-holding classes. How far that is true I leave you to judge for yourselves. The truth is that there are many even now who do not want the poor as an element in the life of the Church,

and have taught them to think themselves outside of it.

"The poor! Oh they go to chapel." That was the answer once given by a wealthy county magistrate to his rector, who inquired how the poor would relish a plan which he suggested for the comfort of the well-to-do churchgoers. In a parish near my own, in Dorset, it was once said by a poor woman, in reply to an invitation to Holy Communion, "Oh! that's for the quality." However wrong she was, such a notion could not have come to her without generations of false teaching.

At this moment the papers are full of the labour unrest. We are threatened with a strike which may exceed in its results anything in our history. Even apart from the coal crisis there have been, since last Lent, grounds of disturbance enough to upset the vulgar complacency in which too many of us have been content to dwell. Never surely has there been so clear a call to examine our consciences. Blinded as we are by habit and by the sights and sounds of a city like Leeds, we fail to see how horrible are the facts about us. Most of us live in a world of ideas, in which we take the slums for granted. We

are content and more than content to make ourselves warm with coal that is won not only at the risk of life, which may be needful, but at the cost of anything like decent living and homes for those who get it. We travel in trains provided with every comfort and even luxury and ignore the question whether those who work them have the means of living a human life. When we are told of a demand for a shilling a week more in wages, or a smaller week's work, we cry out from the cushions of our study chairs, "How monstrous. The country is going to the dogs. There will be no backbone left in the working man if the labourer gets more than £1 a week. He will lose that fine independence, which has made us—what we are," we who are provided from the outset with ample food, comfort in our homes, and an education which at once puts a man into the comfortable classes. And I say that it is a mockery and a lie to talk of the Christian Church as a brotherhood, or to speak of the equality of men before God, if in our whole mental outlook we treat the great mass of mankind as mere hewers of wood and drawers of water. I am not saying that as Christians

we are all to have the same opinions as to a solution, or that in matters so complex it is easy to find a way out. Whatever else is true, Mr. Balfour was profoundly right when he declared in the House of Commons that "whatever our social reformers may think, these social questions are very difficult." What I do say is that the state of our cities, the lives of the vast masses among the workers, are a disgrace to any civilisation, and that in so far as this civilisation calls itself Christian, it is a lie; and all our comfortable piety, and religious books and Church circles do but make the evil more glaring, and are in part an excuse for the way in which the Church is regarded by the working-classes.

As one of our most eminent prelates declared the other day, "if the communicant members of the Church of England sincerely desired these things to stop, they would stop. There is nothing in the nature of things that makes them necessary." The truth is either that they wish them to go on, as the condition of their own comfort, or else that they would indeed like them to cease, but the desire is not passionate enough to affect the problems

the statesman has to reckon with. Observe that I am not saying that as a Church we must come with some cut-and-dried scheme of reform, and impose it as at the point of the bayonet. I believe that no disaster could be greater than that of identifying the Church as such with one particular system of social reform. What we need to secure is not the policy of the Church, but an awakened conscience among those citizens who are Churchmen. Each person who calls himself a Christian ought to ask himself in all humility, "Why is there this appalling mess in the midst of our vaunted civilisation? How comes it that so small a part of it is really presentable? Why are the lives of men the last, and the dividends of the shareholders the first thought with every great company manager?" There is no use blaming the managers. In nine cases out of ten it is not the fault of the manager, but of the investors; all they want is the highest dividend that can be screwed out of the concern, reckless of the lives of those who work it. It is they, not the manager—who is only their servant—who are the first to cry out at any change which even appears to reduce the profits of

capital. This share, however, is going to be reduced. As our own Archbishop told Convocation, the investing classes will have to be content with less, and must prepare themselves for inevitable changes. Doubtless these investors are not all of them Churchmen or even Christians; and in so far as they are not, one can make no appeal to them on the ground of conscience. But many of them are. What fills me with shame is the hollow hypocrisy with which devout Church people will go on in a world strewn with economic tragedies, reckless of their own responsibilty, and content to believe that as long as they subscribe to Church societies and give a little in charity, although they would not speak to those who kneel with them at the altar, they are yet loyal servants of Him who told His followers, that those who refused even a cup of water to one of these little ones were all at one with those who refused it to Him.

My brothers, these are not pleasant words that I am saying. But to-day is no time for soft sayings. Even apart from the time of penitence, the very signs of the time are a call to inquiry. And it is inquiry, self-

examination that is all I ask. I lay down no results, no prophecy, no conclusions. All I say is, ask yourself, "What is the condition of this social welter, of which I enjoy the good fruits and others only the evil? How far am I responsible for its injustice? What can I do to make things better?"

# THE LOVE OF MONEY[1]

"The love of money is the root of all evil."—1 TIM. vi. 10.

ON Wednesday we were trying to see the grounds for inquiry, which *sautent aux yeux* from any clear regard of the present state of the world. We saw something of the conditions of industry; of unemployment on the one hand faced on the other by accumulations without parallel; of vast masses of men shut out from all hope of a worthy human life. This, I said, is discreditable to any civilisation at all, and is a peculiar disgrace to one which still calls itself Christian. But, on the other hand, we deprecated the notion, that we are as a Church bound to forward any particular scheme, and demanded as the main *desideratum*, the awakening of the consciences of Christian men and women. Here, however, we are met by a difficulty. "Look at me," you say, "what can I do? Caught in the whirl

[1] Preached two days later in the same church as the previous sermon.

of this vast soulless machinery of modern life, however I live, I share to some degree in its injustice, and have my own fruit therein. What you say is true, but all that is shown to me of the complexity of economic life and the way in which the simplest act involves the whole social organisation does but make it worse for me. For it reveals at once the complexity of the problem and the difficulty for any individual to find his way through the maze. I am not the man to lead a crusade. If I were, I have had neither the training nor the opportunity. If the evil is so deep and universal as you say—and I do not deny it—clearly more radical changes must come than any which can be brought about by a single person, placed as I am. It looks doubtful even whether one of the very few who has his hand on the tiller of politics could do very much. At any rate, such an one as I can do little, indeed nothing. Still less do I see any ground for enrolling myself as a member of some guild. Meanwhile I have got to live. My wife and children need support. All I can do is to go on earning my living in the way I have been taught; and perhaps try to be a little more considerate to my employés."

That is the sort of reply which many people make to such questions as those I put on Wednesday. Consciously or unconsciously, we feel that the problem is too big for us. "What is the matter with the world is its vastness." Society has got into a mess. We admit so much. But we are not clear as to any schemes for getting us out of the mess, and if we are clear we see little chance of realising them. And so we are to do nothing. Now within limits that answer is quite justified. For most of us it is better to cultivate our own garden. The problem is very large; and some difficulties are inherent in the life of modern industry and finance of which it is hard to see the solution.

One difficulty, however, there is at the root of all—avarice. You may find excuses enough for the investor who draws a normal dividend without inquiry into the conditions of the workpeople or the business morality of the company. It is not easy to find out, and one shareholder has little power. How, for instance, could a maiden lady, resident by the waters of Bath, secure accurate knowledge of this kind? Or, again, a solicitor or a manufacturer, if he be a Christian, ought (though

even that is not enough recognised) to be more careful of the welfare of his clerks or "hands" than a man in the like position who makes no profession of religion, and more desirous of active sincerity in all transactions, ready to earn less, if need be. Even these limits of normal honesty and integrity are sometimes doubted. Still, with all these reserves, it remains true that their income and comfort must rest on the same general conditions as those of the whole world; that these conditions involve the evils which we deplore; and that as a rule there is no call on a man to give up his way of life. That, on the whole, is true. True is it also, as many people tell us, that even an entire change of social organisation could not destroy the evils, without you change characters of men. The strong and cunning would contrive to exploit the weak. The evil would increase owing to the strength of that noble quality, family feeling. All this is what is at the root of our "present distress" —exploitation enhanced by hereditary opportunity. This might go on under any and every social system, although, indeed, I think that its results are worse with some types of life, such as that of modern industry, than they were

under the feudal system or even in some respects the Pagan empire. Still, we must allow that oppression and injustice, and superinduced misery and vice may go on with all systems; and to some extent will do so until the world is perfect. But what gives these things such a hold is just the old simple "deadly sin" of avarice. Very curious it is to notice how those who are most anxious to reform our existing world disguise this fact. I suppose it is due to the fact that many of them have ceased to hold the Christian view of sin. All of us are ready to see something wrong in the system; in the complexity of the world, and the endless ramifications of modern credit, or in the elaboration of processes under modern machinery. But, after all, the machines are worked by men. Above all other causes of our woe there is this one fact—that sin of human greed, no more and no less. That is what we Christians can fight.

Think of it. Look, for instance, at the evils of modern company promoting; and all the admitted frauds and tyrannies of speculative finance! How could they come about if there were not a large number of people greedy of gain and careless how they come by it? To

the great financial swindlers, vulgar in taste and contemptible though they be, we ought to be more lenient than we are. As a fact they would have no material to work with were it not for the uncounted numbers of gullible people. This gullibility is the direct result of avarice. They seek a higher return for their money than it will reasonably produce. They risk all on a gambler's throw, and when it fails cry out against the rogue. Any man or woman who invests money tempted by the hopes of a speculative gain or an unwarrantably high rate of interest, and loses his capital, deserves all that he gets. But our concern here is not with the method, but the motive.

That motive is greed, pure and simple. Our civilisation is not in all respects worse than any other. But it is meaner and more insincere. The reason is that its besetting sin is avarice. So general is this vice, that even we Christians think it a right and proper thing to honour people for their wealth, and are almost surprised at any other standard. There will never be any chance of the Church recovering her influence until she preaches, not this or that panacea, but the positive

wickedness of that ideal of money-getting which the world takes for granted. And not only must she preach it; her members must live as though they were really afraid of the love of money. What proportion of professing Christians have at this moment any notion that they ought to train their families so as to spend less on clothes, or amusements, or luxury, than those who are not Christians. Ask the boys at school or college; ask the daughters of any well-to-do family of Churchmen. In four cases out of five they will have no notion but that they ought to have as much of this world's goods to spend selfishly as those of their neighbours who have no religion. Many of our social problems would settle themselves if the great bulk of communicants ceased to want more than is good for them. "All this is commonplace," you say, "and we know that the love of money is the root of all evil." Yes, but how many act on their knowledge! Is it not true that in the last twenty years this passion for material possessions has invaded all classes of society; that it costs more to cut a figure in the world than it used; that every form of extravagant luxury has multiplied? In no age has the

adulation of wealth been carried so far as in this. Ever since the closing years of the nineteenth century there has been a change for the worse. Never was money so much an idol, or the means of obtaining it more conscienceless, or the objects on which it is squandered less worthy.

With that fact blazing in our faces we need not trouble about economic regulations or new statutes. What we as Christians need most to do is to preach and by our lives to teach that "having food and raiment we should therewith be content," and cease for our part the ceaseless heaping up of gold, or the adding field to field. Thus in a very real sense the remedy for our social entanglement lies with ourselves. In so far as the Christian Church wins to fuller reality, in so far as in penitence her members turn to simpler ideals; in so far as they show scorn for this god of men's idolatry, so far will they be doing what in them lies to bring about that better condition which all of us affect to desire. Reality, that is what we need above all things. Our religion and our penitence must be real. No use can be had from confessing the sins of other times, like cruelty, from which except

indirectly we are exempt. What we need to do both corporately and individually is to repent of this great consuming sin of greed, the passion to Have. For this it is which sears the souls of millions, and by the burning thirst of a never satisfied desire becomes the direct parent of "envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness."

"Oh, when shall we be rich, Mr. Smith; when shall we be rich?" were the words I once heard as the reiterated cry to the agent of one high-placed member of the triumphant classes. And yet these words were the natural utterance of a Churchwoman quite sincere and a regular communicant. That is the symbol of the spirit we have to fight. We need not in this place trouble overmuch about schemes, or organisation, or vast changes. Doubtless they will come. But the change will have results good or bad according to the spirit of man. It is this spirit which needs to be new. Christianity changed the face of the Roman Empire by bringing a new spirit into the lives of individuals and developing that spirit by its own corporate life. That new spirit it is which now we need to cultivate; that "transvaluation of all values,"

which knows that we live by "admiration, hope, and love"; which realises that the true possession of man is character; that all material gifts are merely instruments; and that "the things which are seen are temporal, the things which are unseen are eternal." When we have that, all the rest will follow, and until we are a little nearer to that end and more men's affections are set on things above, we need not wonder, if the wisdom they mainly show is "earthly, sensual, devilish," for that is ever at the heart of the man who worships money; and "where your treasure is there will your heart be also."

# THE BEAUTY OF GOD[1]

WHAT can one offer for your consideration who has never conducted or taken part in a parochial mission, who knows nothing of the particular conditions of this diocese? Perhaps, however, on an occasion like this what is most needed is not a discussion of method, but a presentment of ideas; and such are as likely as not to come from those who look on these things from a standpoint a little apart.

And so let us ask ourselves, what are the main ideas which a missioner in these days should try to bring before those to whom he speaks? Ought they to differ from those expressed by the parish priest? And if so, in what way? What thoughts of God has the missioner to express which cannot be uttered so commonly or so conveniently by the rector and his colleagues?

[1] Address delivered to the clergy of the Diocesan Mission Society, on Monday, June 29, 1908, in the Cathedral Church of St. Peter in Exeter.

Now, the first thing that strikes us is, that the missioner's task is to inspire, the pastor's to edify. The one has to stimulate, the other to construct. It is the office of the parish priest to direct and to educate those of his flock who recognise (at least in name) the royalty of Christ; to help them to maintain their ideal, and to avoid backsliding.

But the business of what we may call his occasional colleague, the missioner, is to present the claims of Christ to those who are deaf to His call; to gather into the fold those who are without it. This firstly; then, secondly, he is to try and elevate the ideas of the nominal Christians, sincere enough, but all too content with a low standard. The object of the one is to help men to pursue high aims; of the other to change their aims from low to high, or from selfish to Christly.

The two tasks are not exclusive, but complementary; nor is the distinction absolute. Still, on the whole, it rules. By slow process, by example and daily work, by the "line upon line and precept upon precept" of weekly exhortation, by the gradual infusion of sacra-

mental life, is the pastor to educate and develop the members of Christ, the "sons of the house" of God. By sudden word, by rapid electric flashes, on the other hand, must the missioner strive to set forth the splendour of the Christian ideal to those who have not known it, or revivify the lamp of service in those who have let it burn low. The missioner is to the modern Church what the prophet was to the ancient. He has to say the word which shall bring life; to show men the difference between what they are and what they might be; to paint before unregarding eyes the beauty that is theirs for the claiming.

It is this truth which I think we need at this moment especially to emphasize. For we want above all things to change the likings of our hearers. In the past perhaps we talked too much of the duty of goodness, too little of the "beauty of holiness." Laying aside for a moment the difficulty of imitating Christ, we seek to make men admire Him. If the admiration be real, worship and service will soon follow. Those who are sunk in selfishness and sin must be induced to see that some other aim is worth while. We know ourselves

how hard it is to conquer a sin that has taken root, even with many efforts and prayers. If others are to begin to make such an effort we must give them reason beyond the mere authoritative "ought." It is the winning and attractive charm of Christ that conquers men's hearts; not the assertion that they are doing wrong.

To the indifferent church-goer, and the casual unbeliever, to the scoffer and the libertine, to the sceptic and the sinner, the appeal is at bottom the same. Is not the Christ-life, the life of consecration, of service—the life of self-denial and suffering, it may be—the life of penitence and prayer, something different from what you have imagined? Is not it, on the whole and calmly considered, the best, the most beautiful, the worthiest thing this world has to show? Teach men first to wonder at the tenderness of St. Francis, the humbled power of St. Augustine, the inwardness of Fénélon or William Law, the strength and sweetness of a St. Louis or a Michel Angelo—teach them, I say, to wonder at these men, and they will begin to seek for themselves the only means whereby they can be imitated.

The question for all men is the old question of our boyhood, "What would you like to be? What sort of person would you most wish to resemble?" Fix this first, and creed and conduct will follow in time. If it be said that many admire the Christian character who do not hold the Christian creed, I answer, first, that is ceasing to be the case; and, secondly, there is always a reserve in that admiration where it exists. Unbelievers may indeed admire the beauty of the saints, but at bottom they will be found almost always to regard them like children, wholly adorable, but full of silly fancies. They honour them for being loving and self-forgetful; they despise them for being penitent and humble. Christian humility is the best criterion of the Christian attitude; if you admire it, however far off, you are not far from the kingdom of heaven; for "except ye repent and become as little children ye cannot enter therein."

Well, I say that our first duty as occasional preachers is to set the ugliness of lives of pleasure-seeking, the sordid littleness of gold lust, in the light that shines from the Cross; and to unfold the Gospel story, or the lives of

the saints, in all their appealing sweetness, in that inalienable splendour of romance:

> "The light that never was on sea or land,
> The consecration and the poet's dream."

It is the lives and characters of men and women, it is the drama of the soul on its undying quest, that alone are the romance for which men toil through dry places unhelped, and exhaust in vain the treasured memories of the ages. A poet sings to the true romance:

> "Thy face is far from this our war,
> Our call and counter cry;
> I shall not find thee quick and kind,
> Nor know thee till I die.
> Enough for me in dreams to see
> And touch thy garment's hem;
> Thy feet have trod so near to God
> I may not follow them.
>
> "Time hath no tide, but must abide
> The servant of thy will;
> Tide hath no time, for to thy rhyme
> The ranging stars stand still.
> Regent of spheres that lock our fears,
> Our hopes invisible!
> Oh! 'twas certes at thy decrees
> We fashioned heaven and hell."

It is Christ, or Christ and His Saints, who reveal to us that inner harmony of things

which a great poet has called "the beauty of God." Of this beauty the Christian has glimpses that are more than dreams:

> "It is certes at his decrees
> He fashions heaven and hell."

It is curious how a clear-headed adversary like Mr. Bernard Shaw is no less hostile to the romantic than he is to the Christian temper, and includes in one dust-heap of scorn the heroism of love and the sacrament of pain. We have then, as it seems to me, first and foremost to win men to this conquering charm, this imperishable romance of religion; and then, after that, to law and discipline. Just now men are singularly intolerant of severity in religion; and the indifferent tend to view Christianity mainly as a body of prohibitions, or a round of dull observances in a life as dull. This is the condition of things that is the fact to-day, whether we will or not. Taking it for granted, let us strive to show the positive beauty and attraction of the Christian character, and the grandeur of the Christian career. Once let men fall in love with its beauty, and they will go through fire

and water to win it. No one realises his own unworthiness like a lover.

So let us go on bravely, and appeal to the heroic. There is always in every man and woman, in every girl and boy, somewhere lurking the enthusiasm for the difficult; and we found all our athletic, and should do well to found our mental, training on this natural truth. If we are to convert, or even to stimulate, we may not disguise the fact that the Christian life does mean the Cross, can never mean anything else, and snatches rapture from the very pains of agony, as the martyrs did. Unless you are to be a vulgar revivalist, you cannot tell the profligate after years of sin, or the self-seeker after a system elaborated by ingenious avarice, that he will find the changed life easy all at once—even apart from the scorn of his compeers. We know very well from our own case it cannot be that.

> "Did ye not deem the road was hard and rough
> Unto the gates of our enduring home?"

It is idle, and worse than idle, to speak as though Christ's livery were worn with ease, that the chivalry of heaven involved no sacri-

fice and no pain. I think there is less error in exaggerating than in minimising the burden of the Cross we bear; otherwise, as soon as men learn its weight, they will thrust it from them. Win men to warfare by tenderness; let the spell of love be cast about them; but never deny that it is to battle you are calling them, to a scene splendid with all the agonies of effort, to a crown bright with tears and sparkling with thorns.

If we do this, if we insist on the beauty and emphasize the grandeur of the Christian life, and all its call for courage and strength, then they will make no trouble about following through scorn and insult, through cost and struggle. Men whose heart and imagination are kindled by the vision of the "altogether lovely" will no more refuse the plunge than a youth intoxicated with the athletic ideal will shun the knocks of games or the hardness of training; or than Jacob refused to serve seven added years for the Rachel of his dreams.

The more I reflect upon it the more am I convinced that if we set forth Christ's royalty in all its piercing splendour, disguising none of the pain, not seeking to hide or to veil the Cross, many will be won to His side who

are left cold by the picture of a Churchmanship, always respectable, of ordered life and decent morals. What the men of to-day above all things dread is monotony. The death-knell of our present *régime* sounds for all who have ears to hear, not in its iniquity, but in its transcendent Philistine ugliness, its saturnalia of the commonplace. Men want to be taken away from this. It is our office as preachers to do so—not by programmes of politics or economics (which, good or bad, are matters for statesmen), but by showing them how, at their doors, in their hearts and mouths, there is a world of absorbing loveliness, that can conquer all the outward hideousness, even of this world.

True, this life needs for living all our energies and all our prayers, and will give us more agony than any other. Christ asks wonders of us; but you can keep a hard rule better than an easy one. We cannot tell how to obey His commands; and yet they are so imperious; and the Voice that calls us, though stern, is sweet and winning; and the thought of the pilgrims who trod that road before is uplifting—and we recollect how to one greater was said, "My strength is made perfect in

weakness"; and perhaps, by God's help, we may some day learn that, "when I am weak, then am I strong."

Such are some of the thoughts which might help us and our hearers, if we heeded them a little.

# "THAT YOUR JOY MAY BE FULL"[1]

THIS morning I was arguing that of all the many aspects of the Christian appeal, it were well at this moment to lay stress upon the romantic side, upon the call it makes to the heroic—which is an instinct in all men.

Now this is only to say that it is of all things a glad thing. It was not, indeed, a distinctively Christian poet who made memorable the words, "A thing of beauty is a joy for ever"; but the truth is at bottom Christian. I think just at this moment it is a truth we can hardly exaggerate, for it is so unrecognised by the multitude. "A kind of Dionysiac rage for life has taken hold of men in the new century," we have been told. And of this fact we preachers must take account. We need to show that more life and fuller is

[1] Address delivered to the clergy of the Diocesan Mission Society, on Monday, June 29, 1908, in the Cathedral Church of St. Peter in Exeter.

to be had from following in the steps of saints and pilgrims than from the race for worldly advantages or appetites indulged. No one who reads of it can deny the strange romantic joy that breathes in the hymns of St. Francis, the *insperata novitas* (as Thomas of Celano called it); or the enraptured ecstasy of the *Imitation*, or the *Pilgrim's Progress*. Compare Henry Vaughan or Crashaw, with their mystical passion, with the pleasure-seeking of the unparalleled *Rubaiyat* of Omar, or even with the grave æstheticism of Pater; compare such a character as Wesley or Bishop Selwyn, or a slum priest or a missionary, with the respectable ideals familiar to a former generation, in *John Halifax, Gentleman*, or Smiles's *Self-help*. Compare the great Christian lives and writings with the writings of moralists or worldlings, and the supreme *differentia* is surely this—of a boyish glee, a life incessantly delighted (fraught though it be with anguish and sacrifice) as against an existence rigorously unhumorous, or a culture too self-conscious to be joyful. The bare facts are against the worldly or epicurean ideas of life; and it might almost be said that, "If Christianity were not true, it would be neces-

sary to invent it," if all the greatest values, personal or poetic, were not to be things unknown. Half-hearted Christians have the pains of both, and the joys of neither party. Unfortunately, the standard of spectators is largely made by such.

But to the free observer it is clear that this is wrong; you cannot judge any system by its lukewarm disciples. What you need is to measure its effect upon men to whom it is the breath of life. Doing this, you will see that those Christians to whom their faith has meant most; who have lived nearest God; who have climbed heights of sacrifice and effort which we weak ones only gaze at from afar; have found life in the world, life here and now, a brighter and more radiant thing, gayer and more playful, and at once more tender and more severe, more sweet and bitter than it ever is to those who have "followed wandering fires, lost in the quagmire" of lust or self-seeking. It always makes one happy to be brave—if one can only be so; and "I have always been miserable when I have done a cowardly thing," said a character in a modern novel. "To be weak is miserable, doing or suffering;" and what is

true of smaller things is truest of all of the touch of courage, the heroism of faith (which needs courage if it is really to carry us), and the strength of sacrifice whose flames "illumine as well as consume."

It is this burning and prevailing gladness that we need to preach both in life and action. For most men are deluded and will not see it. I suppose it is partly our fault. Most of us find it so hard to follow Christ; we feel our own weak and wilful natures so insistent, our sins so omnipresent, that in mere humility we are apt to reflect rather the effort than the rapture of Christ's service, its hardness and not its wonder. Perhaps we should do better if we were less self-conscious; it is not ourselves but Christ that we are preaching, and it is to Him and to no poor follower we must turn men's eyes in worship.

Of whom but a light-hearted spirit—as gay as any modern explorer or ancient adventurer in quest of El Dorado—could that be true which St. Paul tells of himself: "as deceivers and yet true, as unknown and yet well known, as dying and behold we live, as chastened and not killed, as sorrowful yet

always rejoicing, as poor yet making many rich, as having nothing and yet possessing all things." Is it not the very genius of knight-errantry? Is there not the poetry of all the Paladins in that resounding tale of triumph? "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one; thrice was I beaten with rods; once was I stoned; thrice I suffered shipwreck; a night and a day have I been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of rivers, in perils of robbers, in perils from my countrymen, in perils from the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils among false brethren; in labour and travail, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness; besides those things that are without, the care of all the churches."

Truly the Christian is the most buoyant and changeful, the most "rich and strange," of all professions, when it is taken seriously. We too often, as I say, present a contrary appearance—because of the persistence in us of non-Christian ideals. We are bidden to be children, loving and trustful; and yet in our best schemes we betray a commercial spirit, and bargain with God. We are told to be

free and careless of the morrow like birds, or simple as lilies; yet we pride ourselves as English Churchmen on the very opposite, and are never so much at home as when we are denouncing the adventurous. Clothing and wealth, food and worldly name, we are told to take no thought for them. Yet, what is the governing thought of the great majority of Christ's servants? Surely not how they or theirs may best fulfil their service, but how they may retain or win for their children that outward respect that is more to them than life, or secure for them their share of luxurious convenience. When such are our real aims, even though we may add correctitude of conduct, we can never adequately present to others "the kingly crown to gain," for which our warfare is prepared.

The Christian preacher—above all things the occasional preacher—exists to set forth an end the very opposite of this. He is there to proclaim the superiority of something else, the betterment of life that comes not from getting but from giving, not from fulfilling but from restraining desire. We are to take the line that an elder brother would take with a timid self-indulgent junior. He doesn't

want to go out to play; it is hot and he will be tired. He would rather loaf and idle than join in school life; he will be teased and hurt. He cannot see the good of learning to swim or to ride; he sees the danger of it. Or, it may be of intellectual risks that he is afraid. He cannot abide the drudgery of learning; and—what is the use of it. He is brave with his limbs, but he won't face the trouble of thinking; and he can't see the advantage of knowledge, and he does see that it is difficult to acquire. Does not all education amount to saying to such: "You are making a vital error? You are letting your cowardice and indolence deprive you of the joys of living. You can never have the joy of a strong body or the delights of an intellect really alive, unless you can face pain and exertion, and are willing to take some risks." That is our answer to the youth; and it is ultimately Christ's answer to the man trying to find excuses for taking a lower ground.

Gladness can only be had at a price; the Cross is the condition of the crown. Pain and joy are intermingled inextricably in the very nature of life. Positive discomfort you may escape, if you will. You can be selfish

and untouched by many woes—for sympathy in all forms hurts; but a life that is governed only by the comfort of the moment is a life not worth living, monotonous and joyless, like that of the sated worldling. At best the calculating temper leads to the Philistine ideal, to Mr. Bultitude of *Vice Versâ*, poor in character and helpless in every strange conjuncture. Happiness comes from pain transfigured; not from pain unfelt and shunned.

But you will say, where in all this talk is penitence? "You have spoken of the beauty of the Christian ideal, of the charm and attraction of saintly lives. And these are truths, undeniably, though perhaps a little high set for the average sensual man to whom we preach. You have told us of the joy of sacrifice, and hinted at the wonder and delight of those who breathe the atmosphere of God's love. Salutary maxims, doubtless, though rather rare. But our business is with sinners. Primarily ,and above all things, we need to awaken a conviction of sin, to make the nominal Christian realise his unfelt repeated confessions, to bring those who are not Christian to the foot of the Cross. Is it wise to paint the joys of Christian living, the un-

earthly beauty of Christ's character, when for most men there are rivers of agony to be passed, mountains of penitence and grief to be scaled, before that life of beauty and joy can be begun? Is it not, as we say, to put the cart before the horse to teach them to look at the end instead of the beginning, to paint the glory of the Crown instead of the blackness of the Cross!" I think it is wise. For this reason. The men and women I am thinking of need first of all to be attracted to Christ to have their likes and dislikes altered. It is only when they realise how beautiful a thing their lives might be that they will see the ugliness which they are; and that must bring penitence, unworthiness felt and acknowledged. Once we have altered their sense of the value of things all the rest must inevitably follow.

To give back to a world tired and sophisticated the freshness of love and trust; to restore to the men and women of our day, torn with ambitious and ostentatious avarice, corrupt with indulged desires, distrustful, interested, and vain; to restore to them the child's view of life—that is our task, incomparable in its grandeur. To reach that end

we need first and foremost to display the winning and attractive side of Christian character, to show them "where true joys are to be found." When we have done that, we can show people the way to find them. To be penitents and pilgrims, to have sorrow for sin and growth in character (in mature life)—these are notions repugnant to the proud modern world; but we have to make men the one and the other, if they are to win the gladness of St. Peter and St. John. So we may help them to see that Christian faith is a thing of laughter, in so far as it also is one of tears; that just because it beats us down, it lifts us high; that it is radiant and full of wonder, because it is a thing of life and love, and shrinks before no painful encounter in the strife to encompass its eternal end.

# THE NEED OF THE MIRACULOUS[1]

"He taketh up the isles as a very little thing." —ISAIAH xl. 15.

A PERSONAL Spirit, to whom nature is but a small part of His handiwork and absolutely under control: that is the Christian view of the relation in which our heavenly Father stands to the natural world. Of this world He is not merely the immanent spirit, but the maker; not the meaning, but the Master. He takes it in altogether, and manipulates its forces with a knowledge that is complete. An old English mystic describes herself as viewing the whole world as a small round thing, like a berry. It is this power to get outside of nature by viewing it as a whole, to control its forces from without, that we ascribe to God, and is the basis of those miraculous occurrences which seem so strange to those who view but a part.

[1] Preached before the University of Glasgow in January 1912.

This conception is on its trial. To some extent I suppose it has always been so; but it is so especially just now. The doctrine of evolution causes many to think of the universe as a single life developing mechanically. To the Divine Spirit, if they acknowledge one, they ascribe no more than the inwardness of this life. Carried to its conclusion, this view treats all history as the manifestation of this life, and every phase in it as the inevitably determined result of its previous states.[1] Thus the spiritual, if not in terms rejected, is merely the other side of the natural, and either directly or by implication this view denies all personal activity, all real freedom, alike to man and God. Things are so, and they are becoming so; that is all we can say, unless perhaps we allow some act of initial creation.

But we Christians can never admit this. We may assert the immanence of God in the world, and feel His Spirit giving life

[1] The notion of "Creative Evolution," as expounded by M. Bergson, is not open to these objections. Perhaps his system offers the best chance of accepting all that is needful in the theory of developing while preserving the notion of freedom. See especially the use made of this in Canon Simpson's "Creative Revelation."

and breath to all things, and even call the observed imprints of nature the normal revelation of His will. All this we may do. But we cannot regard them as laws, set to Deity itself, with which He is incapable of dispensing; nor can we make of God merely the Life of life, in Shelley's phrase. For He is to us a Personal Creator, surveying, controlling, making; not merely a vague entity, involved in the natural process. No Christian, except by confusion of thought, can acquiesce in a view of God which denies his Fatherhood, and renders him not the Master, but the slave of the physical universe.

Nor can we reconcile this notion with the Gospel story or the claims of Jesus Christ, or the impression of Him in the early Church as recorded in the New Testament. No feature of our day is more noteworthy than the break-down of the numerous attempts to arrive at a non-miraculous residual Christianity, *while still retaining the faith.* Not of course that there are not difficulties; or that the narratives present no scope for speculative reconstruction. By ingenuity which is anything but ingenuous, and sufficient courage in the manipulation of docu-

ments, men are able to analyse away all the more mysterious features. They dismiss the Virgin Birth as a late myth, paralleled in many places; reduce to ordinary quasi-normal cases the stories of healing; treat the empty tomb, and, indeed, the burial, as later additions, retaining some visionary reality from the stories of our Lord's appearances to His disciples, and dissolving into thin air the accounts of the Ascension and of Pentecostal fire. All this can be done. And yet it remains—the *tout ensemble*—something beyond us, unassailable. You can disbelieve it, if you will, but you cannot rationalise it. The whole thing is so strange, there is such a massive impression of miracle and wonder, the "mentality" of Jesus is so weird with all its realities in the other world, and its air of apocalyptic vision, so clear and universal is the early belief in His risen life and the efficacy of the Cross, that we give up in despair the hope of really putting them into our normal categories, and are better advised to surrender the whole story than to retain part of it while rejecting its supernatural ingredients. I think this is the case, even apart from those facts which

form part of the evidence, such as the spread and vitality of the Christian Church, its power alike of recovery and comfort, the peace which it brings still to sick and doubting souls.

In this respect two works, which come from students and thinkers in this city, are of especial value. In the *Resurrection of Jesus*, Dr. Orr argues stoutly for the supernaturalness of the event as a real miracle—the direct act of God, and shows the difficulty of the many adverse theories. In *Jesus and the Gospel*, Dr. Denney sets forth with convincing lucidity the facts and evidence of the belief of the Church in New Testament days, showing how early the Christian community had reached notions of our Lord's person and work, which led the perplexed to worship Him as the Living Christ, and the sinner to find his peace in the precious Blood. The late Father Tyrrell's *Christianity at the Cross Roads* is not the work of one unsympathetic to modern thought. Whatever its defects, that book demonstrates the transcendent and other-worldly nature of the claims of Jesus with His apocalyptic vision, and demonstrates the absurdity of

those theories of German and other critics, who would relegate Him to the rank of a mere humanitarian moralist.

Even more significant is a recent controversy on *Jesus or Christ.* We may describe it briefly as turning on the significance for our world to-day of the person and teaching of Jesus. As against men who repudiate the traditional Christology, but who still regard His teaching and life as "classical and normative," Mr. Roberts takes this line. The whole story is so deeply saturated with miraculous and mystical elements; its atmosphere is so heavily laden with other-worldly odours, that this position is untenable. Disbelieving himself in all miracle or special revelation, he finds it simplest to give up all belief in the historicity of Jesus. The same course has been taken by another able adversary, Mr. J. M. Robertson. I think they are right. If we want a Christ amenable to modern notions, a sort of Athenæum Club Gospel, and a Christianity purged of everything that seems abnormal to the critical student at his coffee, our want can never be met. We had better give it up altogether. It is not to satisfy such that

the faith and love of Christendom for generations has gone out to "that strange Man upon the Cross"; not because He is like, but because He is unlike other men, unique, distinct, supreme. That is why He is to men to-day no less than of old, "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person," far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named not only in this world, but also in that to come, "the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature." Even apart from any single wonder, the appearance of such a Being among men is a supernatural fact, not to be reconciled with any Pantheistic dream of the Divine in man, or rationalist notions of continuous progress mechanically acting.

From the given fact we start. We, as Christians, have a faith, mysterious, supernatural, miraculous. It postulates belief in an order, wherein miracles *do* happen; where things are not connected by means purely mechanical, but where that Personal Life, whose centre is beyond, has entered in and dwelt with man; where from time to time this world fades into another, and we are

caught up to heaven to hear unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Taking, then, as given, this fact of the miraculous, let us try for a little to see something of what it involves. (1) It emphasizes the relative insignificance of this present life. The idea of the miraculous involves the notion that there is a power beyond greater than anything of which we see daily evidence, so great that it can supersede all the known sources of cause and effect; and that this occurs at critical times, the times most important either for the race or for the individual.

Miracles in some form or other are the assurance of a life beyond, and widen immeasurably the horizon of man. If they do not prove, they point to the glory of man's destiny.

(2) This belief is the direct and final denial of Pantheism. Miracles are the acts of a being distinct both from the world and from ourselves. However deeply we depend on God, however strongly we assert the oneness of all things in Him, those strange inexplicable events are a standing refutation of those who worship without discrimination the

teeming life of the world, who submerge all its parts one into the other, and so assert the unity of things, that the Universe, if nominally spiritual, is really conceived as a mechanism. A world in which there are no miracles is a world in which there is no freedom. In other words, every part is necessarily connected with any other part; the only reality is the whole. Without miracles of one kind or another there can be no real personality either of man or God; but everything is pre-determined, or rather, mutually determined, for in this view all events are so many aspects of the one; there is really no before or after. The future is as much a cause of the past, as the past of the future. The world is an ever-changing maze of illusion, a phantasmagoria, which, because it is all one, in the long run will even lose that quality and become meaningless. In such a world I do not say that religion would be impossible; but it could be nothing but a sort of oriental prostration before the All. That is where the repudiation of miracles, so fashionable to-day, will lead you.

M. Loisy, who shares this fashion, declares somewhere that the real question of the day

is nothing to do with our Lord and His Divinity, but turns on the point whether there is anything behind the blind resistless forces of nature, or whether we are involved in a soulless materialism. I deny the dilemma. The two questions are one. If you reject the claims of our Lord, and the facts bound up with them, you will ultimately be driven to that mechanical creed of all life as determined; your religion will be a materialism, which will be none the less such, that it is materialism touched with emotion.

The Deity of our Lord, His works, and Resurrection, are bound up with our belief in a real spirit acting behind and above the forces of nature. What men seek to know is not whether mind is the ultimate reality, but whether we have a Father in Heaven; not whether we are differentiations of the Absolute Idea, but whether we have a God to pray to.

(3) Once, however, grant this Personal Spirit; and what we know (if we do know anything) of the oneness of the physical universe makes His action, if not easier, at least no more difficult to understand. If the physical world be like some great machine

wherein every piece has its allotted place, then a Being endowed with perfect skill and knowledge can produce effects, not possible to others. God's direct action upon matter will appear no less unintelligible than does that of an engineer to a savage, or a hypnotist or faith-healer to the rationalists of the eighteenth century, of whom there are still survivals. I suppose that this is what is meant by the phrase *higher law* so often used as a *rationale* of miracles: an expression helpful to some, though apt to be misleading. The real question is not about the alleged facts so much as about the cause which produces them. A man raising his arm was told by a scientist that he was moving the sun.[1] If so, it is obvious that if God be a personal spirit who acts in nature, He must be frequently producing effects of which we cannot tell the cause. The question is, what made the man lift his arm? Was it as a free action, or the determined resultant of previous conditions? In other words, the whole question of the miraculous is but a particular case of the old problem of freewill or of the

[1] This illustration occurs in Mr. T. A. Lacey's *Consciousness of God.*

one and the many. It is not whether God can work miracles, but whether man does; or whether we are but cogs in a machine, conscious *automata*, with a delusion of imagined freedom. If our acts (even some of them and within narrow limits) are ever due to a free choice between alternatives either of which may happen, then we have shattered that notion of the world to which miracles mean impossibility. We may not see how it is wrong, but it must be wrong if you have a multitude of free beings acting upon nature in ways *not determined.*

Into this question of freedom I do not enter. The Christian scheme takes it for granted. So does the common intercourse of life. Without freedom, it is nonsense to talk of sin and repentance or of any form of moral worth. This is indeed perceived by the more clear-sighted adversaries of miracle. They take the position, logically unassailable, though to my thinking practically impossible, that the whole idea of freedom is mere delusion.

I think they are right. Just as the denial of the miraculous in our Lord's life leads in the long run to denial of His historicity, so

the denial of all miracles as evidence of God's power, leads to the denial of all real choice in man's life, and leaves us with a vast mechanically determined world, which somehow displays itself as a process of developing lives. Thus it would appear that from their own standpoint those adversaries of the Christian Faith, who direct their attack upon its supernatural element, are well advised. They feel that if they can demolish its claims to any miraculous events, they will have shattered the worth of the Christian revelation; and that men would discard it. In this belief, I think, they are justified. Those apologists are woefully in the wrong who would throw overboard the whole apparatus of miracle in the hope of saving "the leading ideas" of Christianity. Christianity is, above all else, trust in a Person, who reveals to us both ourselves and God, and saves us from ourselves. The essence of Personal action, whether here or beyond, is that it is free. Are men likely to go on worshipping that Person if there be nothing to show that He had special relations to the transcendent world, and that that world is personal. Cut these evidences away, and there is nothing

left to withstand this doctrine of rigid irresistible mechanism, which reduces to nought all effort and robs love of its meaning. Once accept personalism as the truth of things, and we have life tragic in its meaning, and varied, bright with a thousand hues, broken into uncounted contradictions, but aflame with hope and illumined by heroic adventure. Deny it, and you have a dull and uniform world, a universe of Government departments and red tape, where effort is vain and love and sacrifice "vanity of vanities."

One is the world of Christian Faith and of common experience. The other is an intellectual construction based on an imperfect generalisation from certain observed facts (only a small part of our life), and welded together by the passion for uniformity. It is, I grant you, the "mentality" of the modern man, apart from religion. But that mentality seems to me ugly, joyless, and deplorably superficial, with all its claims to profundity.

That the Christian Faith runs cross and counter to this is evidence of its glory and beauty, and *a prejudice in favour of its truth.*

To level the Faith down to this mentality would be to deprive it of its incommunicable charm, its claim to raise man above the iron world of mechanism, and assure him of his eternal value. If I am told, that I am pitting my own sense of personal values against the unanimous opinion of the age, I reply (1) that it is not unanimous; (2) this mechanical obsession is a superstition, unwarranted by actual life. Idols of the cave there are, no less than of the market place. And the denial of human and Divine freedom is the most dangerous and the most common.

Nor are we alone in this. In his assertion of the worth of personality, if only that of some persons, in his dislike of mere abstract thought, Nietzsche, who is one great influence of our times, makes for, not against, that Christianity which he attacked. The same tendency is apparent in the numerous evidences that we are on the eve of a new romantic movement in art and literature, for to romance life is always a great quest. Further, in many movements in philosophic thought, those of the Pragmatists, of Bergson,

of the new realisms, we find much that is exaggerated, and more that is inconsistent. But they mostly agree in this, that they are a protest on behalf of personal freedom, of a world of free activities against those systems of thought which deny these things; which under more or less vague disguises, and a cloudy magniloquence of semi-religious phrases, would merge all personal distinctions into an all-devouring Absolute, more destructive of true human life than any Moloch or Chemosh of old.

Twenty years ago, one who has since become known in literature, told me that, so far as he could judge, everything had now been said that could be said, and that in future the only possible literary force was personality. Whether he was right or wrong, it is certainly the case, that it is for personal values, personal impressions, for men, in fact, that the world is crying out.

We live, it is said, in a democratic age. The only true democracy is that of the Cross of Christ, which redeems every man; the only freedom the glorious liberty of the children of God. It is Christianity alone,

with its doctrine of the infinite worth of every human soul, which can develop the powers within, making us proud as princes, and humble as penitents. The true truth for all men is in Jesus.

To-day men shrink in horror from the evils of civilisation, its appalling tale of wreckage and waste, and lives with never a chance. Even more do we recoil from ideals which would make oppression and injustice eternal. One greatly concerned with these things, ardently labouring for betterment, was asked, as he outlined vast schemes of change, by what force he hoped to achieve a transformation so tremendous. For answer he gave—the one word—*Jesus.*

After all, it is Jesus the world needs, and no mere abstract theory of God. To Him we are brought back after all our struggling thought. We cannot find even ourselves except through Him—no faith in God worthy of the name, no hope for man that will not vanish, except in "that strange Man upon the Cross," who speaks peace to them that are far off and to them that are nigh; and tells us of His Father in Heaven, whose love

stooped so far as to give His only begotten Son, that all that believe in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

> "Christ is the end as Christ was the beginning,
> Christ the beginning as the end is Christ."

# THE PRIMARY OFFICE OF THE PRIESTHOOD[1]

"Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation."—MARK xiv. 38.

PRAYER is the great office of the Church and must ever remain her privilege. To enter into union with the Divine life, to live as it were with the secret of all reality, to have the society of God, or as a body of men, to live that life through union with Him and by virtue of the holy fellowship—that is the true crown and glory, the enduring honour of the Church. And for that reason she must ever be a puzzle to those without. At bottom the Church is an object of suspicion to the world, and she always will be. The world tolerates the Church as long as it can patronise and subjugate her, as long as it thinks that her members do not really mean what they profess to mean; but the moment she goes beyond this, men cannot understand her. The

[1] Preached at St. George's, Hanover Square, on Trinity Sunday, 1912.

Church goes with men so far and no farther; she performs much useful work and then stops short. So much waste of time there seems; energy that might have gone to active labour is spent in the so-called service of God. Churchmen prate of worship when there is still so much undone in the service of man.

So they say. So they always will say, for the real meaning of the Church lies beyond. By the very law of her being, she is bound to be other-worldly. However active and energetic her ministry, however much she may be concerned to help the fatherless, to visit the widow in her affliction, still there is always an *arrière pensée;* there is always something behind and inscrutable, and people do not like this.

She has her inmost heart fixed on the Lord, who, although here, is yet invisible, and even when most really present, as in the Holy Sacrament of the Altar, is yet present under a veil as He was in His Incarnate Life, with all the outward appearance of sovereignty denied.

Now it is this prayer-life, this prayer-world, which is the meaning of our existence as a

body, and it is the purpose of those functions which we commemorate to-day. I wish to think not at this moment of the doctrine we symbolise to-day but rather of those who go out to symbolise it.

Throughout England, indeed throughout the whole world at this season, at this hour, we might say, men are being set apart and holy hands are being laid upon them for—what?

Well, you will say, they are ordained for many things. They are to be ordained to preach and to work, to visit the sick, to teach and to govern. Yes, for all that they are ordained; but above all things they are ordained to pray. You may think that this is not the case. We can all pray. No special sets of men are needed for that; no special class. That is true. And yet the supreme act of prayer is the Eucharist; the whole purpose of the Eucharist is to show prayer at its highest. And, moreover, even apart from that, special times of prayer and people occupied therewith are needed, human nature being what it is. Unless there are those whose special office it is to look after worship and to stand for the element of prayer in

life, then it will infallibly collapse, unless all Christians are saints, which they are not, nor are likely to be, nor, in one sense of the word, are ever intended to be.

What is everybody's business is nobody's business. This is not less true in religion than it is in civil life. And if there were no special set of men put apart for the office of prayer, so far from the average layman praying more than he does now, he would pray less.

You know that this is true. You know very well that however little time you yourself give for prayer, and however greatly you may be bored by the duty, as you think it, of attending church, yet that you would pray a great deal less if there were no set times or places in which to pray. You may, I dare say you do very often, set at naught the duty of public worship on one pretext or another, or at least neglect it. But do you actually, as a matter of fact, find that on those occasions you spend the same amount of time in private prayer, only praying the more fervently than you would have done in church? You know very well that you do nothing of the kind. I do not say that such an alterna-

tive is not possible, or even that in some rare spirits it does not take place. A bed-ridden woman with no education and few comforts may not only spend more time in prayer, but may use every moment of the time far better than you or I ever do. Now and then there are those like Brother Laurence in the seventeenth century, the author of the *Practice of the Presence of God*, who, in the literal sense, prayed without ceasing, and who had reached that state when, as he said, it made no difference to him whether he was cooking the dinner or actually at the office of prayer.

But those are not the great bulk of Church people, nor will they ever be, nor in my opinion does God mean them to be. That special power is a gift, like the gift of music. It is a matter of temperament. Most of us need the help of set times and places, or we should cease altogether to pray. You can pray at any hour of the day. A new day is always beginning. Why pray, therefore, at morning and evening? That is the kind of argument used.

There is no cant like the cant of unconventionality—the cant which says: "I can

pray walking, I can pray working, I can pray in bed no less than when I am set to it and when I am very often not in the mood." That is true, quite true. But who is most likely to use these chances? It will be the person who prays at the set times and not the person who prays only at his leisure.

Most of us, or at least I should say, most men, have passed through a period when we began by saying to ourselves that we were too tired to kneel, that we could pray without kneeling down and could pray in bed, and then ended by dropping the habit of prayer altogether.

So I say that the primary purpose of the priesthood is to be men of prayer. It is not to lead "the strenuous life" of which we hear so much from those who like Transatlantic ideals. At this moment we hear of all kinds of needs in the Church, and they are very real. We hear of the need of more self-sacrifice, of more energy, of more economic ability, of more intellectual alertness, of more sympathy with all movements for making life more gracious for the disinherited, more desire to cleanse the Augean stable of modern civilisation of the horrors of corrupt capital-

ism on the one hand, and those millions of lives born without half a chance, born to disease and crime and sin almost as a destiny, on the other.

Now all this is true. We do need more self-denial. The notion of the Church as a comfortable, gentlemanly, respectable profession, with less call on the powers than medicine or law, is a notion which has simply got to go. Religion is a flame. The priest is to be aflame with energy set on fire by the love of Christ.

But this is not all, We need a clergy alive to the intellectual needs of the day, abreast of modern problems. The idea of the priesthood as being encased in a sort of mental cotton-wool, unable to appreciate the difficulties surging all around them, and accepting the traditional theology without any inquiry —that, too, is a *damnosa hereditas* from days when people mistook traditions for conviction and convention for principle.

However great his activity in visiting may be, or in conducting clubs, or any other form of outward work, the priest needs to be able to give a reason for the hope that is in him, or he cannot win those on all hands who

in these days are persistently demanding such a reason.

We must remember that the Church requires to interest people as well as to help them, and so many people are complaining that the Church is not interesting. Doubtless it is mainly their fault, but it is partly ours.

Still more is it needful that the priest should be on the side of the great movement which seeks social justice. I do not say that he should be imbued with any special opinions, but his sympathy ought to be one way. The idea that the clergy as a matter of course should be enlisted on the side of property, conscienceless, unscrupulous, entrenched behind legal bulwarks, and that their only relation to the poor is that of patronage, is false to the very notion of Christianity. Whatever their views, whatever the lines on which they may expect deliverance to come, the clergy must give up the idea of being a sort of extra decoration of the upper middle classes. They need to be aflame with the horror and the shame of our civilisation, a civilisation which is a disgrace to anything that calls itself Christian, in its treatment of a very very large part, more than half, of its members.

They need at least to desire to see the world better and sweeter; a place where the great masses of men shall have the likelihood of leading a life worthy and well equipped, and of using those gifts which God has implanted in them. More than ever it is clear to me that we are on the eve of great changes in the whole world, perhaps it would be truer to say we are in the midst of them; and it is of capital importance that the priesthood of Christ's Church should not be by prejudice or sympathy upon the side of Dives as against Lazarus, and that they should lead the Church to take to heart once more the language of the prophets about oppression which is very applicable to-day, and the words of St. James, yes, and of our Lord, too, about those who "devour widows' houses while for a pretence they make long prayers."

All these things are very real. I wish they were felt more passionately; but, though important, they none of them come first. The primary office of the priesthood is to witness for God in this world, and the primary means for this purpose is prayer, including all the forms of it, public and private. It is for the worship of God that we are set

apart; for the wielding of the mighty forces of prayer and the guidance of other people in the use of it; and woe be to us if we are false to our mission. However active, or brilliant, or intellectual, or sympathetic, or generous, or democratic we may be, there will be hollowness and sham at the bottom unless all this springs out of a life of prayer. We need an active Church and not a comfortable class. We need a Church intellectually alert, and not somnolent and conventional. We need a society of all, not a coterie of a few; no dispenser of boons, but a gracious social life, a real Christian democracy, in which there are no rich nor poor, gentle nor simple, educated nor illiterate, but in which Christ is all and in all. But before and above all things we need a praying Church. And the office of the clergy is by their own life and their teaching to forward that, not by being better necessarily than other people, but by living the prayer life.

But, remember, the clergy are only the leaders in this. It is the Church as a whole that is to be a praying Church. They are not likely to do their part unless you do yours too. The Church of the future will

be more and more the Church of the layman. Some of you, I dare say, have friends, or relations, or acquaintances about to be ordained at this season, or at least young in the fellowship of this mystery, and it is yours to help them, to help them above all by prayer and not by expecting them to be nice companions in social amusements.

The clergy in any age are largely what the people make them. All clergymen have been laymen for at least twenty-three years, and unless they live in a praying community, many of them—not all, but many of them—are hard put to it to become in any true sense men of prayer.

So I would this morning ask you to consider in your own lives these questions: How much do my prayers mean to me? How much do they cost me? How much do I really give of myself or even try to give either in the worship of God in public, or in prayer for those I know, or for those I do not know? Do I pray for my friends, for my servants, for those who work for me or with me? Do I ever seriously pray for my country, for all those with whom I have to do in life?

Do I pray about my work that it may be God's work, or my pleasures that I may have them as in God's sight?

Prayer, remember, is a new life and it is a very difficult one, and it has many temptations of its own. Do I ever seek to know anything about it? Prayer is the greatest, the most real, force which the world knows. It makes more changes than anything else. People used to say *Laborare est orare.* It is true to work is to pray. But we to-day need to bear in mind the counter truth, *Orare est laborare.*

Ah! if it could be that our Church—not the clergy, but our Church in all its members —were really and vitally a praying Church; if it could have some glimpse of what a power it has hold of in this method, so quiet and gentle and, to the world's eyes, so silly, if it could rise to the heights of God's worship alike in its supreme symbol of the Eucharist and in the secret chamber and alone; if it could ever answer truly that question of the Westminster Catechism: "What is the chief end of man?" "The chief end of man is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him for ever"—if it could

only do this, if you and I could do it, do it for a little and only by flashes, then in a very short time England would be different from what she is, and the world would be changed, and there would be smiles among the angels, and Christ would be pleased.

# CHURCH AND STATE[1]

"Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you."—1 ST. JOHN iii. 13.

THE Festival of St. Alban leads us to consider the quality and cause of martyrdom. Modern inquiry has dispelled the illusion that the persecution in the early Church was due merely to caprice or to personal unpopularity, or some abstract legal pedantry about *religio illicita*. The true cause of the conflict between the Imperial administration and the Church has been definitely established by Sir William Ramsay in *The Church and the Roman Empire*. There he shows that the difference was one of vital principle. Christians were persecuted because they set up a "new non-Roman unity," repudiating the dogma of the omni-competence of the State. In other words, they were persecuted because they were a Church. The perception of this

[1] Preached in St. Alban's, Holborn, on Tuesday, June 18, 1912, at the Annual Festival of the E.C.U.

antagonism was more or less unconscious on both sides, from the day when Tacitus spoke of the Christians as *hostes humani generis—i.e.* at war with the current pre-suppositions of society—down to the final struggle under Diocletian. It was because the State demanded and the Church could not yield an unlimited allegiance (symbolised by the Emperor-worship) that the Christians made so many Roman holidays. Apart from this there might have been local riots or mere conservative cruelty. But what redeems even Galerius or Decius from sheer wickedness and lifts the struggle into the universal sphere is this claim of the new society to a life underived from the State, with the consequent right to impose limits on civil allegiance. It was because he saw this that St. John wrote the words, "Marvel not if the world hate you." Why should they be surprised? It was the most natural thing in the world.

The dogma of State absolutism had come to the Roman Empire, the hard-won guerdon of millennial contests. The city-State recked nothing of the individual, save in and through itself—still less of any competing society.

The whole world, *humanum genus*, took it as an axiom; political philosophers made it their starting-point; and the Imperial lawyers wove it into the complex system which still holds very largely the allegiance of the civilised world. Was it likely that men would surrender without a struggle those principles which seemed involved in the very notion of civil unity—or that the world-spirit in Rome would admit that its god was an idol? No. It was not likely, and it did not happen—the Church did not conquer without a war.

That war is still proceeding. With the peace of the Church under Constantine it might seem that the Christian idea of the State as the controlling power, guiding but not creating other societies, had come to its own. It was not so.

So deeply were men imbued with the notion of a single all-absorbing authority, that from persecution of the Church we pass to persecution by the Church, and witness for many centuries the dominance of the ideal of a great Church-State, with no freedom for other societies. More than this, the doctrine of the centrality of political power

won its way into the inmost arcana of Church government; and found in the spectacle of an omnipotent world-priest a symbol more august, more enthralling, and more profoundly dangerous to human society than any secular *Imperium*. It is the positive facts of the ancient compact city-State, developed into a universal system, made the corner-stone of law and politics governing alike the Church and the world, which are, as Bishop Stubbs said of the *Corpus Juris Civilis*, fatal alike to civil and religious liberty.

It is that *damnosa hereditas* we need to get rid of in the interests alike of a truly free State and a rightly functioning Church. *Libera Chiesa in libero Stato* is and must be our ideal. It is that battle—the battle of freedom in human society—that we of this Union are fighting. And we need to know what we are about. Some years ago I heard a remark of an eminent mathematician: "The English people have not realised the idea of a Church." It is true. That any corporate society, whether Church, or trade-union, or family, should assert its inherent life and by its claims on its members set limits to the moral omnipotence of the law

is to most Englishmen, and especially English lawyers, unthinkable or repulsive. Our most eminent writer on Constitutional Law, Professor Dicey, writes with dislike, even in regard to the Act of 1857, that "a clergyman, though an official of the State, is virtually allowed to pronounce immoral a marriage permitted by the morality of the State."

That is a very mild expression of the attitude commonly taken to-day. Mr. Justice Darling's words in the case of Canon Thompson were stronger. It is that sentiment of the absolute supremacy of the civil law which our Union exists to combat; though it must be admitted that in the past it has been effectually contested by non-Catholic bodies like the Presbyterians and the Baptists.

Matthew Arnold was wont, in his inimitable way, to make fine sport of Mr. Miall, the Nonconformist M.P. of the seventies, and his words about maintaining "the dissidence of Dissent and Protestantism of the Protestant religion." We might adapt his words and declare that we exist to maintain "the churchliness of Churchmanship and the Catholicity of the Catholic religion."

It is for Christianity as a distinct entity for which we stand—no mere philosophic or ethical system—and for English Churchmanship with its peculiar note. Neither as against the State, of which we are citizens, nor as against that whole of which we are but a part, though a living part, do we lay claim to unlimited freedom. As citizens we bow to the just claims of that great England which bore us; as Catholics we would not if we could be severed from that stream of universal life which flows through the Church of the ages. While maintaining our distinction, we would not unduly press mere insularity. We claim to be not worse but better citizens, because we are loyal Churchmen. So we claim to be not worse but better Catholics because we are English Churchmen. Of the illimitable authority arrogated by the civil power, we say that it is false to the facts of human life in society; that we are doing a service to politics by asserting on the highest plane the doctrine of the inherent, underived, though not uncontrolled, life of societies within the State. In regard to the Church we say that we are laying down the lines upon which alone the reunion of Christendom

is thinkable, in so far as we protest against the ultramontane theory of authority, which would centralise all Church life at one point, which is entangled with a narrow view of development, the outcome of conditions in the West for ever passed away, and which rests on certain notions of Roman jurisprudence, false no less to the fundamental facts of human life—the family, the town, the union—than to ecclesiastical development and national honour. Before I close, let me briefly review some ways in which at this moment we need to fight for this distinctness of our organic religion.

First, in the realm of thought. In her latest work, that lady, who attempted in *Robert Elsmere* to solve the religious problem for one generation, has returned to the Arnoldian ideal of Erastianism. In her earlier book she made her hero resign his preferments on adopting Unitarian views. Not so with Richard Meynell. The purpose of the book is to maintain the thesis that since the national Church is national no limits can be set to the opinions of its ministers. It is no question of altering the limits, but of denying them altogether. Other contro-

versies have very striking claims of a similar nature. It is alleged that historical criticism must always be open to a priest; that a priest while still officiating as a priest is free to deny not merely the miraculous but every single historical element in the Christian creed, so that a Drews or a Jensen might occupy the thrones of Canterbury and York, with moralists like Nietzsche in London—at least that is where these principles logically lead. Such principles would seem ludicrous and impossible, even to their holders, were they not all based on an initial, though unstated, assumption, that the Church as a distinct society does not exist. If she does not exist, the place of any individual priest is a matter of convenience and law, and no opinion can matter. If she does exist, she must have some bond of cohesion beside the State.

More virulent still is the same tendency in regard to law. Baptism and Confirmation are repeatedly treated as of no value; not because they are bad conditions of membership, but because they are conditions at all. Men scorn the notion that the Church can lay any specific obligations upon her members.

They do this rightly on their principle—for on their principles they do not believe in the reality of the Church at all. It is a name for certain delegated functions of the State. On many burning topics—education, the marriage law, even the status of a Disestablished body in Wales—we see widespread the same notion, that the Church has no right to any distinctive life of her own, and that those who claim it are obsolescent mediævalists.

Even in the sphere of morals the same is true, though it is harder to prove it, for the whole topic is more vague. Still, there are easily discernible tendencies which claim for every one all the rights of Churchmen while repudiating every kind of obligation.

The notion that the Church has authority is simply repulsive to many who still continue to demand every privilege of membership. Yet this is to deny that the Church exists. No society of men but by the very nature of things has authority over its members; it cannot be a society with a permanent end and meaning without it. Nobody is quite the same person as a member of a society as he was apart from it. Thus it is no distant, far-fetched idea for which we fight.

In claiming the rights of the Church we are claiming to lay down the true nature of the State; we are fighting for the just recognition of all those societies, from the family to the province, which in any great State arise in such uncounted variety. The battle of freedom in this century is the battle of small societies to maintain their inherent life as against the all-devouring Leviathan of the whole—a Leviathan not less but more dangerous if its form be democratic. It is for this freedom that we are fighting, and if it be true, as Acton said, that "Liberty is not a means to a political end, but is itself the highest of all political ends," we can claim that we are doing service no less valuable to the State than needful to the Church. So true is it that the Christian law is a perfect law of liberty, and that in Christ, and only in Christ, can all the families of the earth be blessed.

# THE CHRIST LIFE[1]

## I. Friendship

"Ye are My friends."—St. John xv. 14.

Friendship with Jesus—that is the central fact of our life as Christians. All religion means some sort of fellowship between man and the Unseen Powers. But this is "the joy and the glory" of ours that it is a human friendship transfigured. "Christianity means not a system, not a body of doctrine, not even a Church, but a person—Jesus," these were the words I heard from Mandell Creighton at my confirmation. Its elaborated theology, its developed organisation, its wealth of beauty and devotion, its splendour of ritual, all its triumphs of architecture—all are but the outcome of this one fact, that men have found in Jesus a Friend, and lived their lives in His society. This it is, this sense of friend-

[1] Preached in Great St. Mary's, before the Cambridge University Church Society.

ship, that gives to the Christian life its charm, its aroma of tenderness and intimacy. It binds in a union deeper than all differences men so diverse as John Bunyan, or William Baxter, or St. John of the Cross, or St. Carlo Borromeo, or among ourselves a Pusey or a Liddon, a Henry Martyn, a Westcott, a Wesley. Differing in mental outlook, in range of culture, in theological tendency, in ecclesiastical climate, they all agree in this—that the best thing in them, that which still keeps them alive in memory, is this felt friendship with Jesus. Take the one saint to whom, after the beloved disciple, the heart of Christendom has gone out, St. Francis of Assisi. Why are Protestants and Catholics at one in their love for him? What is it makes him so wonderful? Assuredly not gifts of intellect, or organising power, or strength of will; but just this, that his life was one long outburst of love to Jesus; that this friendship saturated his being, and issued in all beauties of service and love for men.

Let us try for a little to trace out some of the meaning of this friendship.

1. Friendship brings knowledge. This is a fact of common life, though in religion many,

even good men, seem to think the contrary. But it is the method of experience, and Jesus Christ came to show us that it is the way to know God as well as man. No one is ignorant that personal intercourse is the main, the only source of our understanding of one another; or that if we trust to a critical outside observation, we are apt to go wrong in judging men. No one but admits that in human estimates of all things living, sympathy carries us deeper than cleverness. And if we are to figure God as a Person, the same must be, it cannot help being true in our knowledge of Him; that is what Christ came to show us; "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." It is through personal friendship with Jesus that we come at all closely to know God; for "this is life eternal that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." That is why prayer and meditation are so vastly more important than either study or work (though even good men refuse to see this); that is why the mystic is greater than the thinker; that is why a man of supreme gifts of intellect and knowledge said once, "the deepest truths I ever knew I learned

from old women in their cottages." For this reason we can never express the true essence of our knowledge to those without, and they will always laugh at us. They must.

> "The love of Jesus, what it is,
> None but His loved ones know."

2. Friendship lifts us; it shows we are worth something. Love always individualises the lover; it makes him feel he is worth while. It is the constant and even hackneyed commonplace of literature and dramatic art that the love of a good woman will set a bad man on his feet again, and redeem the wastrel. The Christian who knows that he has been worth while to Christ is at once the humblest and proudest of men. For love reveals both our wretchedness and our worth. It shows us our difference from what we love, and brings us down; for the first time it reveals our weakness and poverty. "I am not worthy of her; I am not worthy of her," is the cry of every lover; and when, in spite of everything, he finds his love returned, his whole being is exalted. So with us. When that beauty, so strange and so unearthly, first dawns upon us, we know how little

worthy we are; and it is only because He is all love that He can help us.

"Know'st thou not, how little worthy of any love thou art?
How hast thou merited, of all man's clotted clay the dingiest clot?
Whom wilt thou find to love, ignoble thee?
Save me, save only me?"

is the word of Christ to the soul.

The love of Jesus, that great love, which made Him lay down His life for His friends, reveals to us as in a flash the glory, not only of God, but of man, of men, of me—Jesus loves me, even me, so I am worth a little after all. Each of us, first in abasement, and then in exultant joy, has to learn for himself, what we say to others by rote, that his soul is infinitely worthy, despite all its stains and weakness, because he is one for whom Jesus died.

Many and clamorous at this moment are the claims that call for our allegiance; some of them are noble, all have their own attractions; but none has the power of Jesus, none has that assurance of our being worth while, having each a meaning, each for himself, that is given us in Christ. Many, and

those the loudest, now only tell us in differing tones that we must sink our life in the whole of which we are parts. He tells us better; since Jesus loves me, my personal worth is infinitely enhanced; and life becomes the working out of a friendship, in thought, in feeling, in act.

Love, though it cannot come to itself without sacrifice, is a willing sacrifice, which, by its willingness, strengthens the will; we give ourselves, and find ourselves in the giving. Look at St. Paul. Was there ever a character whose sacrifice was more complete? —think what he went through. "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one; thrice I was beaten with rods; thrice I suffered shipwreck; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of water, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness; besides the things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the

churches." Think how entire must have been his gift when he was heard to say, "To me to live is Christ": and yet if ever there was a man forceful, individual, almost wilful, it was he. Look at St. John or St. Francis, or any you have known for a saint, Dolling, or Gordon, or another; was not their character distinct and personal? We need have no fear that Christ asks us to give up self in this sense. To make the Christian sacrifice into the annihilation of self is to preach not Christ but Buddha. It is we whom God wants, separate, weak, sinful, yet able to love and act, worthy, we know not how, of the friendship of Jesus.

3. But He does want our sacrifice. We must give ourselves to have Him. We must die to live, as all lovers have to learn. We must never think of friendship with Christ as only a boon to be enjoyed; friendship apart from mutual service is merely sentimental, and may easily become something worse. The mystical sense of union with God, if enjoyed for its own sake alone, can be, and has been the source of immorality. "Ye are My friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." Christ is a gift—the greatest of all gifts—but we may not rest in it, we may not merely

enjoy it. It is all very well to say, I am my Beloved's and my Beloved is mine; but if we say that and no more, at best our religion will be self-regarding, a sort of cupboard love. Love that is worth anything always means giving, not receiving; we have to learn by bitter pain that it is more blissful, happier, to give; and it is hard and long, this learning. And we must mean the giving, not merely say it. We offer ourselves, our souls and bodies a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice. How much do we mean by this? You remember how Browning puts the lady's case in the story of the Glove and the Lions. It was not for mere vanity that she threw the glove, but to see how far De Lorge meant what he said:

> "Too long had I heard
> Of the deed proved alone by the word:
> For my love—what De Lorge would not dare!
> With my scorn—what De Lorge could compare!
> And the endless descriptions of death
> He would brave when my lips formed a breath,
> I must reckon as braved—or of course,
> Doubt his word—and moreover, perforce,
> For such gifts as no lady could spurn,
> Must offer my love in return.
> So, wiser I judged it to make
> One trial what 'death for my sake'
> Really meant."

And so she threw the glove. Now, Jesus is just like that; He is ever throwing the glove among the lions, and we have to pick it up, or forfeit His friendship. And the better friends we are, the more fierce are the lions —we are not to dream anything done when anything remains. It is St. Paul who dies daily; it is St. Francis who has embraced the Lady Poverty, who is severest in discipline and denials, untiring in service, unsparing of tears—how many tears has your religion cost you? "If a man should give all his wealth, yet it is nothing; and if he should outwardly express great repentance, yet it is little; and if he should be of great virtue, and very fervent devotion, yet there is much wanting; to wit one thing, and that most necessary. That leaving all, he forsake himself and go wholly from himself; and when he hath done all that he knoweth to be done, let him think that he hath done nothing." We must "give all for all," if we are to be the friends of Jesus; bitter is the cup that we must drink.

Strange how like it is to earthly love; we are afraid of it, as many a man is afraid of falling into love; for we know not where He will lead us, or what He will demand; we do

know that He will lead us far, and ask of us something great. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God."

And yet we cannot help ourselves; we cannot get rid of Jesus. Jesus is the lover as well as the loved; and He will not be denied. The world is always trying to get Christ out of its life, and always trying in vain. Men explain Him, they deny Him, they flout Him. They say His story is an illusion of the mythopœic faculty; they say His Church is the invention of the priests; they say He is not who He is, and never was; or they say Christian teaching speaks of Him truly, and for that very cause He is hateful, contemptible, slavish. But they cannot get rid of Him. He comes back. Back and back, bewildering, terrible, with that appalling power of weakness, strange, homely, human, divine, so like us, so different; there He stands and calls, this Jesus; nay, He does not call, He hunts us—He will not let us be:

> "I fled Him down the nights and down the days;
> I fled Him down the arches of the years;
> I fled Him down the labyrinthine ways
> Of my own mind, and in the mist of tears
> I hid from Him, and, under running laughter

Up vista'ed hopes I sped,
And shot, precipitated,
Adown Titanic glooms and fears,
From those strong feet that followed, followed after.
But with unhurrying chase,
And unperturbèd pace,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,
Came on the following feet;
And a voice beat more instant than the feet.
Lo! all things fly thee as thou fliest me."

They do. Jesus is the Saviour of this world, not only of the other; in the long run we can live but in the light of His friendship. Deny heaven and soon you are driven to deny earth; and this world of human spirits, man's thoughts and loves and hates, becomes a vain phantasmagoria, without hope or meaning, without spirit or reality. He is the pearl of great price, and we need to sell all that we have to get it. We must pay this price, this bitter price, even to retain our earthly love and service; even to secure any worthy and enduring aim in life. And then —then, when you have really given, when you have surrendered; when you have made the plunge, and thrown your heart across the stream, when everything, money, friends, intellect, prospects, safety, reputation, all are offered, then you will enter into the treasures

of a love that knows itself; in the light of that love this world comes back to you with a new meaning. Grasp all, as the proverb says, and you lose all; give all, and gain all.

"All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or life and death, or things present, or things to come—all are yours"; why! "Ye are Christ's and Christ is God's." May it be so with you.

# THE CHRIST LIFE

## II.—Fellowship

"Members one of another."—Rom. xii. 5.

Friendship with Jesus is, as we saw a week ago, the first word of our religion, but it is not the last. Some who feel very deeply the Divine intimacy are apt to make of it the whole of Christianity, and to depreciate that society, the Church, which is on earth its expression, "the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." Because we are members of His body, we are members one of another; we belong to Him, and therefore we belong to the Church, and the Church belongs to us.

"Did Christ die for a metaphor?" Seeley once asked. Did He mean nothing when He preached the Gospel of the Kingdom? That Kingdom is wider than we know. Yet, with whatever limitations or defects, we are forced to regard the Church as its representative here on earth. And this is no more than

natural. No man liveth unto himself alone. Whether he likes it or not, man is a social being. He can only realise himself even as an individual through some form of communal life. What would any of us here be like, but for family, for school, for college—each of them a life mediated through social sympathies and exclusions? At times these are apt to seem fetters, but we have learnt to see in them the very condition of realising ourselves. Service is the only perfect freedom. So with the Church. Men chafe at its dogma, so hard and binding. They rebel against its rule, its ordered hierarchy, its system of external sacraments, its round of fast and festival. Why should such officialism come between the soul on fire for God and its Divine Lover? Why should not each man "work out his own salvation" alone and apart? Why indeed? Why does anyone make a mess of his life, if he try to leave it entirely alone? Why does a system like school come between the boy's idea of free development and its accomplishments? Why does its discipline, its masters or prefects control the desire of the new-comer, natural and fresh, to do what he likes, when he likes,

and learn as little as he likes—whether without or within doors. In such a mood all custom, and ritual, and rule, every form of social pressure seems either superfluous or harmful. We ask to have done with these things, to throw off the past with its enchaining prejudice, and "gang our ain gait." It may not be; there is always something "pert and provincial," as Tyrell said, about religious life, however sincere, which despises the Church; without the help, the guarantee of society we can make no progress in civil life; and this is not less true of religion.

Try and think away all that comes to you from the definite ties, enchainments if you will, that bind you to social unions, such as the State, the school, the Church; and the relic of individual life left to you will seem poor and trifling.[1] It is not good for man to be alone even in his piety.

It is indeed not a little remarkable that the very persons who desire to make of

[1] Gierke, *Das Wesen der menschlichen Verbandes* (21). "Wollten wir unsere Zugehorigkeit zu einem bestimmten Volk und Staat, einer Religionsgemeinschaft und Kirche, einer Berufensgemeinschaft, einer Familie und mancherin Vereinen und Genossenschaften wegdenken, so werden wir in dem ärmlichen Rest unselber nicht wieder erkennen."

religion a purely private and individual thing are very commonly men whose life has been made possible only by the advantages of some well-defined class or order, whose traditions they have almost unconsciously assimilated, by sharing in whose life their activity has been at once conditioned and developed.

In social and political thinking we have been getting rid of that atomism, that individualist anarchy which ruled men's thoughts under the influence of the Manchester school. We are learning, however slowly, the meaning of corporate personality, not as a legal fiction, but as a universally operative fact. It would be strangely contradictory if in respect of religion we should ignore those facts which experience has shown to be inherent in human society, and embrace a standpoint in regard to the Church that has become outworn in matters of State.

Nor again is it historically true that Christianity is merely an individual private affair. From the first it was social. This is the fact writ large over the New Testament, and we hear of no Christian apart from the Church. Even some of the later facts alleged to the

contrary make in reality for our view. Methodism, for instance, was an eighteenth-century religious guild. It arose, not through a denial of the social idea, but out of a need for its expression in some warmer and more intimate form than those in favour with an Establishment chilled by Erastianism and saturated with class contempt. Even the Society of Friends is a society. While it insisted on the inner light, the Quakers became, in their own despite, a compact body, distinct from other Christians—in this sense a Church—bound together by all sorts of social taboos. The very existence of sects as sects is a tribute to the idea of the Church.

Modern undenominationalism, indeed, affords evidence to the contrary; but even that is not complete. The facts of the social nature of man are proving too strong for undenominationalism, and it comes forward demanding the establishment and endowment of certain tenets, and the exclusion of others from the State schools.

Even philosophers and scholars are not purely individualists. They form schools, societies of men who inherit their tradi-

tions, adopt unconsciously their preferences, and are, though in a low degree, moved by the social principle. I have heard University Extension criticised, because it attempts to convey culture by occasional teaching without there being any society to keep it in living activity.

The Church, then, demands our allegiance, as the home of the Christian spirit, the cardinal expression in a society of man's ineradicable religious instinct, gathering into itself all that is most worthy alike in Judaism and in the religions which it superseded.

Based upon baptism it is a democracy; we see no attempt to separate out the tares from the wheat, or to deny her privileges to the worst sinner, provided he comes in penitence and faith. Calvinism and Puritanism always tend to make religion an aristocratic thing; the privilege of the few, the elect. The Church is the home and heritage of sinners; it is no coterie, but the assembly of the first-born; no drawing-room meeting, but the commonwealth of God.

1. Let us think of the Church in three aspects—as a family, as a school, and as a

kingdom. All family life points to the Church, and finds therein its meaning. The Church is the one family in heaven and earth, the body of the children of God, brothers and sisters of Jesus. It does for us as children of God what healthy family life does for us as children of men. Home is a place of love, of natural gaiety, and of rest. In the Church love is taken for granted, as it is in a well-ordered family. There may be less ceremonial of courtesy than in our dealings with men without. It is less needful; we take it as of course that we care for one another. Doubtless in the Church we do this less than we ought; and even among brothers and sisters there may be bickering, yet we do not doubt that they care for each other. So it ought to be, so to some extent it is in the Church. With our class contempts, and our party hatreds, and our personal squabbles, we are far enough from full brotherhood. Still, to some degree Christians do bear each other's burdens, and they are doing so more and more. The cry for reunion heard on all hands is one proof of this, while it has been declared by a historian

not too favourable to ecclesiasticism, that no institution has done for the brotherhood of man one tithe of what has been effected by the Holy Communion.[1]

At home again we can be natural. The Church does not make religion easy; it can never be easy to take up the Cross and deny oneself, but it does make it in some sort natural. Devotion, prayer, almsgiving, service are not easy things.

Yet who can deny, that though not easy, they do become possible, and in some sort natural, among the members of the Christian family? For in the Church the Christian spirit finds itself at home; and the more deeply imbued we are with that spirit, the more shall we find the usage and order of the Christian family natural to us. It is hard enough in all conscience to pray, still more to lead a life of prayer; but for most men it would not only be hard but impossible, apart from the tradition of the Church with its united worship and the lives of the saints.

Home is, further, a place of rest. We

[1] Professor Gwatkin in *Early Church History*, i. 224; cf. *The Knowledge of God*, ii. 291.

are at ease there; we need not worry. The world and its anxieties are shut out; even ambition does not trouble us at our home. We are content just to be. So in the Church; if we use her aright, a great peace comes to us, we have the sense of being anchored, secure; we need not trouble or argue, but simply take the gifts of God's grace and rest in them.

2. The Church is a school no less than a home. It teaches and disciplines. By uncounted subtle means in its worship, its art, its doctrine, and history, it reflects the thought and life of many generations; it gathers up into itself the religious treasures of the race; and we inherit them, we "heirs of all the ages," in a deeper sense than those without. Others have planted and we have entered into their labours. It is not merely that we belong to the Church; the *Church belongs to us.* Just as a newcomer at a great school or a university becomes at once part owner of its priceless history and appropriates its tradition, so does the weakest Christian command the treasures of all the ages, their holiness and love. I may be poor and weak and selfish.

But St. Francis and St. Ambrose, St. Thomas and St. Augustine have entered into my life; mine are all the conquests of Christendom, just as the humblest new boy owns some part in the "centuries" of the captain or the honours of the Newcastle scholar. It is no mere abstract name, the Church, it is the living unity of countless men and women, some with us, more on the other side. We are rich with their achievements, brave with their martyrdoms, dowered with the grace and beauty of their devotion. Let us take these things to ourselves, and be more natural and at home in the Church; whether here or up and down the corridors of the past, "let us walk about Zion and go round about her; let us tell the towers thereof and mark well her bulwarks; let us set up her houses, that we may tell them that come after."

To the Church, then, we come, as to school, to learn and to be trained. For this end we must be willing and humble. We learned at school our own littleness; how insignificant we were compared to the whole; how ignorant we were of all that we thought we knew. We did not lightly set aside the gifts and the

experience of the past, and we could not if we would set at nought the authority of the present. So it is with the Catholic Church. Her creed and dogmas, her prayers and order come to us, not as mere outward idols, but as the embodied form of that Christian life of which we ourselves are units. We treat them, not as so many statements to be criticised from a superior standpoint, but as the thought and will of the Christian community, all the living saints and penitent sinners, who have "in that strength gone many days and many nights." Can we, save at great risk, discard them? Could we, save driven with reluctant anguish, turn away and treat them as naught? Alike to Zion and to ourselves, we owe it not to leave these bulwarks undefended, these walls unmanned.

3. We owe it. The Church is not only a home or a school, it is a kingdom. Like all Kings, Christ asks for loyalty. Wearing His livery, we can never be as those who wear it not. We are distinct not as individuals merely, but as a body; a loyal nation, a holy priesthood, a peculiar people; not our own masters, but the servants of Him whose Name is on our foreheads. Marked with that

Cross, foes know us as well as friends; and they make us fight. We cannot help ourselves.

Timid, reluctant, weak, time-serving, us they compel to the battle; we cannot take our ease even in God's Church; "for Zion in her anguish with Babylon must cope." Never, indeed, will the Church have rest while the devil goes about. "The lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life"—are these less alluring than of old? Why, men are making idols of them and bidding us fall down and worship once more. Do you feel for yourselves that their charm is undone? No man who really lives can say so. Fight we must, willy-nilly, with our minds against doubt and scorn, with our bodies against sloth and fleshly sin, with our soul against the prowling hosts of Midian. We wrestle, not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. "Live dangerously," said Nietzsche; and men to-day embrace the word. Never, never was there such glorious, dangerous living as that of the Christian assailed by unnumbered foes,

his life a ringing tournament of love and death, all his being tense with the wrestle; "as deceivers and yet true; as unknown and yet well-known; as dying and behold we live; as chastened and not killed; as sorrowful yet always rejoicing; as poor yet making many rich; as having nothing and yet possessing all things."

For this fight, though hard, is joyful. For us is the freedom and ease of children; for us the gaiety and zest of schoolboys; for us the courage of knights and the devotion of lovers. The scarlet and the trumpets—all are ours, if we will but hear the call and take the Cross. So only can we fight, gay and smiling. It is not in gloom and hardness, but with the reckless gladness of the saints, the carelessness and light-hearted glee of children, that we must look for the crashing of ramparts and the fall of Jericho. Dullness will never master the flaming dragons of sin; and in these days of fire it is no faint heart that wins and keeps "the first and only fair."

It was Jesus Himself who prophesied tribulation, and added, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world," for He alone had the secret that conquers death; none else but

us are free of God's wide world here and after; all beside are in fetters of the spirit, slaves either to self, or the world without, or the darkness.

> "He is the freeman whom the truth makes free,
> And all are slaves beside."

## THE CHRIST LIFE

### III. Growth

"I'm quite good now," were the words of a child to his nurse on returning from a holiday, where all had been glad. The nurse, we may be sure, was not deceived; she knew how quickly the childish passions would break out, the halcyon days be gone. What the child said is what many of us are apt to think; and to think over and over again, in spite of all the times we have proved our mistake. Those who have been troubled about their faith will have moments of insight, when it seems as though nothing would ever shake it again. To the victims of some distressing sin there come days of peace, when they feel that God has put their transgressions so far from them, that never, never can they fall. The worldly-minded or the selfish may be at times so moved by the vision of the beauty of God or of some

devoted life, that they breathe another air, in which the colours of earthly things show poor, and self has vanished. Above all, the man who has passed through the direct catastrophic change known as conversion may be so highly uplifted that he imagines all to be done, and, rejoicing in the new-found peace of spirit, he believes that he will now be saved from all serious sinning; and perhaps looks down on other Christians as slow-moving and unenthusiastic.

Against these and suchlike vain imaginations there is one shining safeguard. The sacramental system of the Church reminds us that the Christ-life is a process, a growth, not a single achievement; that our pilgrimage is long and full of arduous toils, that we are morally certain often to stumble and halt, sometimes to wander into by-path meadow, "hard by to which is the castle of Giant Despair," whence we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves; but if we endure to the end, if we can but last, trusting not to our own weak and self-confident desires, but to the gracious gifts of God, then, and then only, shall we be saved. "Seventy years it takes to make a man," was the word

of one who had thought about life. Do you think it takes less than a lifetime to make a Christian man—in any worthy sense?

Let us consider some of the ways in which the Sacraments may help our life, as God's growing children; may keep its diverse forces in harmony, free us from trusting to feeling which is always changeful, or to momentary catastrophes which are neither universal nor sufficient, and if relied on will lead to pride, the deeper that it is often unconscious. Baptism is the beginning. None of us but knows that, or denies that therein we receive unconsciously, for the most part, a gift of God which sets us in a new world and puts before us fresh claims and opportunities other than those merely natural. Baptism is like letters of naturalisation, it gives us the privileges of citizens in a new kingdom, and lays upon us also its burdens. We may use these privileges to the full, and perform or shirk the duties—just as a naturalised Englishman may be a good or a bad citizen; but we cannot change the fact of our adoption. We have now a right to cry, Abba, Father; our life is lived in the spiritual and Christian city. The early date of Baptism

in most cases brings this gain. We realise better that our life as Christians is a gift, not an independent acquisition. We envisage it as a growing, changeful thing, as a life; developing itself as in education by training and conflict and manifold trials. I think it is true that those Christians who greatly minimise the value of Baptism, or deny it, are hard put to it to find the right place for children in the life of the Church. Of course, I do not mean that in Puritan families there was not and is not a very real attempt to bring up children as sons of God. But such views certainly tend to make men regard the Church as consisting of adults, and of children as only preparing for the Church, not as a part of it; or else to attempt to antedate the experiences of men and women in the young. Many errors in education have come from trying to eradicate childishness too early. Books like *Robert Falconer* or the more recent *Father and Son*, illustrate what I mean. In the last a ten-year-old lonely boy is expected to go through all the experiences of adults, and have their interests and none other. Perhaps some recent phases of the schools question are due to a certain feeling that

religion is chiefly a thing to be obtained by the adult.

All this, however, is for us here a matter of theory. We are past the stages of Baptism and Confirmation. Topics more vital must hold us to-night. Sin, actual, chosen sin, is the fact which looms largest in our inner life as Christians—Christ's weak and treacherous friends. We may try to ignore sin, if we are not Christians; we cannot do so, if we are. Even the best of us has the defects of his qualities; it is the purpose of grace to give him the qualities of his defects; to transmute into its opposite that very sin which doth so easily beset us. It is not the natural inherited virtues, some of which in differing degrees belong to all men, which show the triumph of Christ in the soul; but the grace hard-won and hardly-won by "many a bruise and blow, by deaths of others 'and well-nigh his own,'" like the diamonds of Lancelot, the bravery of those naturally timid, the strength of some characters amiable and easy-going, the flaming faith of a sceptical inquiring mind, the loving sympathy of the close and self-contained. And these are the only true goods of character. The man who

is brave by nature often proves a coward in a strange conjuncture; the timid who knows what fear is is less surprised. The strong in character may be like Samson, weak as water when some other passion gets in the way Above all things sympathy, when it is a mere natural gift, tends to make us unfair to those we dislike; it is the unsympathetic, who has prayed and striven for the grace, who is gentle and open to all.

Very well, you say, very beautiful, very admirable are the characters you hint at. But how am I to reach thereto or anything like it? It is all I can do to make use of my good qualities, much less transform my bad; and failure is incessant and depressing. Well, that is the first step; to know our weakness, and leave off trusting to ourselves. "If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us; but if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness," not pardon merely, but victory is promised—on one condition. We must look facts in the face and tell them to God. Of course, we don't like to contemplate the things we are, the things

we have done. We are afraid and hide ourselves, because we are naked. We make work, pleasure, controversy, prejudice so many coverings to hide us—but in vain. And, here, I should be more a coward than I am already, if I forbore to tell you one thing which I have found for myself after bitter struggling against it. The habit of auricular confession *does* make a man realise his own weakness, and trust in Christ alone in a way nothing else does. There is no disguising the truth. It is bitter, terrifying at first, but it does make penitence a real thing. I say this having tried the opposite, and, I think, in sincerity. When I was ordained, confession was strongly advised in the addresses given. With what results I know not. Personally, I resisted the impulse; and observe, not because I did not, but because I did (and at bottom I knew it) need this help; nobody more. Twelve years it took since then, and far deeper was the agony and the sense of weakness before they brought me to this peace at the last. It is not nice to me to say this; but you have come to hear a man's experience, and I could not fairly leave half out. I would like that no one here should

wait so long or be so weak, who was in so sore a need. Of course, all do not need it; and for some it may be dangerous.

But I am speaking neither to saints nor to angels, but to men with the frailties and temptations of men. You may not feel the need yet. But you have a long future before you. Do you suppose the devil is going to leave you alone because you have a real desire to serve God? Things may happen at which now you shudder. "Is thy servant a dog that he should do this thing?" Then like many men in middle life, you may become indifferent or even hostile to religion, just because you have never had the pluck "to make a clean breast of it"; and so you feel half unconsciously that there is a bar which hinders you from using the Church's means of grace.

There are, I think, many other incidental gains. The habit is healthy and a foe to morbid views in religion. It promotes naturalness and gaiety in the Christian life, because it effectually puts the past behind us and gives us fresh starts. It is the supreme preservative of the child-spirit; even if a man's outward actions seem to change but little, a

regular penitent is a different being from what he was before, and has a fund of humility and trust. The best way to avoid depression and religious melancholy is to have things out with God from time to time and no one has found a better way than this.

One cause of the religious success of the Salvation Army is the stress it lays on public confession; while a Presbyterian Professor declared that this was the greatest instrument yet known for advancing the moral tone of Europe. It makes for peace and strength and joy, and gives sanity and balance to the religious life in regions which peculiarly need it.

Whether, however, you decide or not to use this form of it, remember this, that only in the attitude of penitence can you approach the sacrament of the altar. The Liturgy is saturated with the confession and pardon of sin. Some have called it an Extension of the Incarnation; perhaps they are to be preferred who would choose rather to speak of it as the Extension of the Atonement. It is the Lord's death, that we therein "show forth until He come," the one sacrifice once offered that we plead before the Father for the sins

of the whole world. If we live our lives in constant view of the Eucharist—*i.e.* of the Cross—we must perforce be leading lives of penitence, unless we leave out of mind the larger half of its significance. And penitence ought rather to be a habit of mind than a separate act; though it is in no way incompatible with this, that the Eucharistic life is also the life of joy.

But there are many ways in which the regular use of this means will help us to right lines of thought and action. The Eucharist prevents us from thinking we have already attained. The man who needs and takes its frequent refreshment cannot doubt that the Christ-life is a progress from strength to strength, a slowly unfolding growth, not a mere possession.

It saves us, too, from an error even worse, trusting to ourselves, our own zeal and love, perhaps the greatest danger of souls once turned to noble purpose. The very outsideness of the means, its material veil, made by some a source of cavil, is a help. It reminds us that grace is a gift, that before all things we are recipients (though our wills must concur). The Eucharist preserves us from

certain perils inherent in the doctrine of the inner light. If you push that to an extreme and leave out other aspects of truth, you may be tempted to regard your progress in love and service as your work rather than God's. We see to-day the ill results of this sense of achievement in religion. On all hands it is leading to a religion mainly subjective, and thence to a denial of anything behind. First, men reject the need of any external means of grace, as unspiritual; and then they go on to repudiate the thought of a Saviour. If your own soul's uplifting to God be all that is needful, why all this bother about Redemption from without? After that, the Incarnation goes, and our Lord appears as only the classical instance of the uprush of the human spirit towards a vague Divine.

Further, the Eucharistic gift is common to all. It comes to those sincerely trusting, whether their sins be few or many, and whatever their feeling or spiritual weakness. To some men at all times, to all men sometimes, there come seasons of dryness, when, do what we will, we are not able to rejoice in that "inward affectionate sense of God's presence," at other times so consoling. Yet

we need help most in these conditions. I think that some who seem always to live in this way may serve God more truly than those of warmer feelings and more developed spirituality. To have religious interests is very different from leading a good life. Now the sacramental system saves us from all mere "temperamentalism" in religion. This gift is constant, outward, and universal. It unites in humble trust the religious genius and the ordinary man or woman who wants to lead a straight life and bring up his family well. God gives to some times of refreshing moments of exaltation, when all is transfigured. Let us take care not to trust to these, above all not to pride ourselves on them, and look down on those who are without them, perhaps through no fault of their own.

And yet He does give us these times. The supreme worth and joy of the Eucharist is yet to come. It takes us out of ourselves, away from our struggles and our sorrows, above our weakness and our failure; it helps us to forget even our sins. We need to grieve for sin, but not to worry over it. It is right that we should confess and abase ourselves,

but it is wrong not to trust in the pardon richly given, and to rise on the wings of self-forgetting love to the heights of praise and joy. The final word is that which sounds in the Sanctus and rings in the Gloria—praise. It lifts us, takes us away from the earth into the very heavens and the Holy of Holies. For a while we can see life sweep past us unregarded as we rest in that peace; and let our joy in God burst forth in note upon note of acclaim.

If we have the Eucharistic penitence, if we take the Eucharistic gift, if we live in the Eucharistic strength, let us by no means rest in these things; but let us go on to claim our full share in the Eucharistic praise, the echo here on earth of that song which in the heavenly places is never silent. It is not only the living creatures or the twenty-four elders, not only the saints and the great ones of Christ, who go where you and I dare not go, and conquer where we are beaten; but it is all, a great multitude, every living creature, who unite in that undying hymn:

"And I saw and I heard a voice of many angels round about the throne, and the living creatures and the elders; and the number

of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a great voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches, and wisdom and might, and honour and glory, and blessing; and every created thing, which is in the heaven and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them heard I saying, Blessing and honour, and glory and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

THE END

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